THOUGHTS

ON

THE HOLY GOSPELS:

HOW THEY CAME TO BE IN MANNER AND FORM AS THEY ARE.

BY

FRANCIS W. UPHAM, LL.D.,

AUTHOR OF "THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE," "THE WISE MEN, WHO THEY WERE," AND "THE STAR OF OUR LORD."

NEW YORK:
PHILLIPS & HUNT.
CINCINNATI:
WALDEN & STOWE.
1881.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION 13–20

PART FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

OPENING THE WAY.

CHRIST JESUS calls to Himself His Witnesses before any sermon, before any miracle—The first official act of His chosen Disciples similar in character—On that occasion St. Peter declares the Resurrection to be the Great Sign that Jesus was the Son of God—The Significance of the Resurrection—The Disciples find the main evidence of it in the Life of their Lord before His Crucifixion—Some of the bearings of this upon the Construction of the Gospels; upon the brevity of the direct evidence of the Resurrection given by St. Matthew; also upon his silence concerning the Ascension—Consideration of the fact that the faith of the Disciples in their Lord was, for the moment, paralyzed by His Death..... 21–38

CHAPTER II.

INTENT TO HAVE A WRITTEN GOSPEL.

Absurdity of the assertion that the chosen Witnesses never thought of writing out the Gospel—Review of what has been said to give a color of pretense to this

—Peculiar Feeling of the Jews, in the time of the Disciples, that Judea only was the Holy Land—Evidence of this in the story of Petronius—Why the Oral Gospel and the second and third of the Written Gospels were, like St. Matthew's, so much restricted to the land of Galilee—The inspired Evangelists reveal Christ Jesus as the Saviour—Bearing of this upon the Construction of their Gospels..... 113–133

CHAPTER VIII.

INSPIRATION OF THE GOSPELS.

Fullness of the Promises of Divine Aid to the Disciples in their office of Witnessing to the Lord—They reach to Words as well as to Thoughts—Concerning the Nature and the Limits of Human Testimony—Did the Holy Spirit secure the absolute accuracy of the Chosen Witnesses in every detail of every thing their Witness touched upon?—St. Jerome's and St. Augustine's opinion that He did—The accuracy of each Statement in the Gospels can be verified—Bearing of this fact upon the Inspiration of the whole Bible..... 134–146

PART SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

STYLE OF THE EVANGELISTS.

Underestimate of the literary and historic merits of the Evangelists—Of their Style—Its fitness to their subject—Inquiry into the charge that they were heedless in marking Times and Seasons—Their Silence as

to the Day of our Lord's Birth—The Full Beginning of His Ministry in Galilee, and other Dates in the Gospels..... 147–158

CHAPTER II.

TIME OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

Introduction to an Essay concerning some remarkable peculiarities of the Earliest of the Gospels.... 159–163

The believers in Christ Jesus as the Messiah looked upon, for a time, as a Jewish sect from which nothing was to be feared—The state of Feeling in Jerusalem after the Crucifixion—Change seen in the arrest of St. Stephen—Character and intent of the Persecution that followed—Its effect upon one then writing of the origin of the imperiled Sect—General and special Evidence in St. Matthew's Gospel that it was written as early as the Seventh year after the Crucifixion—Of the Transferring of his Gospel by the Apostle himself, at a later Date, from the Aramean tongue into the Greek. 164–195

CHAPTER III.

THE GENEALOGY IN ST. MATTHEW.

Bearings of the Discovery, verified in the preceding chapter, upon St. Matthew's giving the Genealogy of St. Joseph to prove the Messianic lineage of Jesus—Loss of much knowledge of ancient Jewish usages, and the gradual recovery of some of that knowledge—Features of the Genealogy in the Earliest Gospel—How it proves the ancestry of Jesus—The reason why St. Matthew did not give the Genealogy of the Mother of our Lord—Evidence of this in some verses in the Gospel of St. Luke..... 196–208

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOSPEL OF THE INFANCY.

Alleged variances between the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke as to the Infancy—They grow out of St. Matthew's concern for the safety of the Blessed Virgin—Importance of the Time-Order of the Gospels—St. Luke's Silence concerning the Coming of the Magi and the Flight into Egypt—St. Matthew's caution reaches to the kindred of the Holy Virgin—Evidence of this in his silence concerning the two miracles wrought in Cana of Galilee—Similar caution in the Second and Third Gospels. 209–226

PART THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORAL AND THE WRITTEN GOSPEL.

Of the Thirty-three recorded Miracles, all the Evangelists record the Sacramental Miracle—Twelve miracles belong to the Oral Gospel, and probably Five others—Five are given only in the Gospel of St. John—The recital by the Three earlier Evangelists of the other Ten recorded miracles, shown to be related to their Characters, or to the Plans of their Gospels, or to something peculiar to those miracles—The Healing of Malchus, the Paying of the Temple-Tax, and other Miracles—The relation of the Discourses and Parables in the Earlier Gospels to the Oral Gospel—Absence of Parables from the Last Gospel..... 227–239

CHAPTER II.

ST. JOHN AND THE EARLIER GOSPELS.

Reasons for Treating of the Earlier Chapters of the Last Gospel—The Different Portraits of John the Baptist—consistency of his Character and History—Why his personal Testimony to the Messiah is given only in the Final Gospel—Of the bringing in of his Witness into the Prelude to the Gospel of St. John..... 240–253

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLIER CHAPTERS OF ST. JOHN.

Of the Continuing of the Proclamation of the Baptist—Of the Earlier Ministry of the Lord in Judea as a test of its Fitness to be the Field of the Gospel, and as Preparatory to the Full Beginning of His Ministry—The Miracle at the Wedding-Feast at Cana in Galilee—The Cleansing of the Temple—The Coming of Nicodemus by Night—The Silence of John concerning the Miracles then wrought in Jerusalem—His reference to the Imprisonment of the Baptist—The Warning sent to Jesus, and His Flight from Judea—The Revelation of the Messiahship to the Woman of Samaria..... 254–274

CHAPTER IV.

ST. JOHN AND THE EARLIER GOSPELS.

Nathanael's Confession, and the Earlier Call of certain of the Disciples—The Confession of the Disciples recorded by St. John not to be confounded with the later Confession at Cæsarea-Philippi—Of the Prudence

of our Lord as made known in the Earlier Chapters of the Final Gospel—Why only one Going up to Jerusalem is spoken of in the Earlier Gospels..... 275–286

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST AND THE SECOND GOSPELS.

Of the Theory that the Earliest Gospel was for the Jews, the Second for the Romans, and the Third for the Greeks—Of St. Matthew's historic Gifts—Differences between his Gospel and St. Mark's and St. Luke's—The Descriptions of the Storm on the Sea of Galilee, in the first and second Gospels, compared—Of St. Matthew and St. Peter as narrators—The originating motive of the Second Gospel—Other motives—Its evidence of the Incarnation—Testimony of the Fathers to St. Mark's having written out the Gospel of St. Peter—Of the Divine Foreshaping of the Facts that were to become a part of the Holy Gospel..... 287–319

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE.

Of St. Luke's Repetition of some Facts for the third time—New material in his Gospel—The testimony of the Fathers to St. Luke's having written out the Gospel of St. Paul—The Common Interpretation of St. Luke's Preface untenable—Interpreted in harmony with its historic relations—Of what St. Paul wrote to the Galatians concerning his Gospel—The Epistle to the Hebrews—The Acts of the Apostles—St. Luke writes under the eye and in the Defense of the Apostle to the Gentiles—

yet St. Luke is more than the Champion of St. Paul and more than the Historian of the Church—The Relation of the Third Gospel to the Lord Jesus..... 320–344

CHAPTER VII.

ST. JOHN AND THE OTHER EVANGELISTS.

Characteristics and Harmonies of the Gospels—The unfolding of the Revelation of Christ Jesus as the Son of God, and then as the Son of Man—Relations, in this point of view, of the Earlier Gospels to the Last—The Gospel of St. John—It looks more to the Future than the other Gospels, and completes the Evangeliad—The Argument in all the Gospels made by the Saviour himself—The unfolding Revelation of Christ Jesus in the Gospels follows the same Course as the unfolding of the Revelation of Christ Jesus in the Course of events—Evidence of the Inspiration of the Gospel in that it is the True image and likeness of the Lord..... 345–358

CHAPTER VIII.

UNITY OF THE EVANGELIAD.

Special Affinities and Correspondences between the Four Gospels, and between parts of the Same Gospel—Allusions to the Ascension in the Final Gospel—Description of the reception of each of the Four Gospels in its turn by the Christian Congregation in the city of Alexandria 359–367

tion of the holy Gospels; yet Christians are to "give a reason for the faith." That reason must be somewhat adapted to the unbelief that makes it needful to give that reason; and it is the duty of Christians to answer all proper questions concerning the time, the writers, and the inspiration of the Gospels. Yet such is the insolence of the challenge of infidels that it is hard to keep from treating it with the silence of contempt; for, making larger demands on credulity than pagan priestcraft ever made, they would have us believe the double wonder, that the ever-existing Congregation of the Lord knows nothing of her own records, and that of those records *they* know every thing.

One needs be quick to seize upon what seems to them their argument, for capriciously, suddenly, and frequently it shifts its ground, moves its dates backward and forward, and changes its form. Just now what they have to say runs thus: The Gospels are later than the time of the disciples; their contradictions are many; their character, legendary and superstitious. The Epistles are the earliest Christian writings. Only four of the thirteen that pass for St. Paul's (those to the Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans) are indisputably his. The disciples never thought of any written memorial of their Lord, because they were looking for the end of the world. But time went on: pious imaginings of

what Jesus might have said and might have done (sometimes enkindled by what the prophets were thought to have foretold) intermingled with what Jesus said and did; and, at length, fragments of those traditions were gathered up and written out. These private memoranda were of no official or sacred character, and they were less valued than the common, unwritten tradition. Time went on, and more scrap-books were made; they were more prized, and they grew in size. Then unknown hands, at unknown times, pasted together these fragments of things remembered and of things imagined, and—behold! an infidel miracle more astounding than any Christian miracle—they made two of the holy Gospels! Even so the universe was framed by the chance-concurring of unintelligent atoms—the harmonious universe, written all over with forethought and design!

They say this hap-hazard gathering together of sayings of Jesus and of sayings put into his lips was the earliest form of St. Matthew's Gospel. Thus, unwittingly, they give the early Christians the praise of thinking more of the words than of the works of the Lord, save his death on the cross. But, dimly seeing that such a divorce of his words from his works is incredible, they go on to conjecture that a second form of St. Matthew's Gospel was soon made by constructing around his sayings

a frame-work of accordant events—truly, another astounding miracle! And some think the first Gospel developed itself out of the second.

In words betraying a dead conscience they say that one "honest fraud" was baptized in St. Matthew's name, and another in the name of St. Mark. Out of similar material St. Luke's Gospel was fashioned, and, with the Acts, was shaped to suit the aims of one of the parties among the early Christians—that is, the third Gospel and the Acts were two political pamphlets. The last Gospel is a religious novel composed for "pious purposes" after the death of the last apostle; but, with a commendable modesty in those who know every thing else, they cannot tell who wrote the Gospel of St. John.

To borrow terms from their self-complacent jargon, "the more advanced" do not "accept" the superhuman. Still, their reluctance to own that there can be aught that is greater than themselves is offset by their readiness to "accept" the degradation of themselves; for, with their denial of God, there goes a denial of the spiritual, the immortal in man, and of all that constitutes the difference between men and the brutes, out of whom these dehumanized creatures feel that they evolved.

This is a fair summing up of all that there is in the ponderous, multitudinous volumes of the unbe-

lief of our time concerning the holy Gospels. With this lunacy it is humiliating to contend!—yet scholars, in different countries, working long in concert, have contrived to throw around this nonsense an air of learning and almost an air of sense. They have almost persuaded themselves that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus is the fable they wish it were. This is their hope, not their conviction; yet they destroy many. Their madness wears "a reasoning show;" and some who argue against it countenance it by the concessions of wavering faith, of secret unbelief, of thirst for celebrity, and of the lack of common sense.

In this volume the results of my thinking are often so shaped as to answer some of the charges against the Gospels without otherwise alluding to them; but its purpose is a more difficult one. It inquires into the construction, the method, of the holy Gospels, and into their affinities with each other. It treats of the relations between the two apostolic Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. John. It determines the date of one of the Gospels by an original course of investigation. In a word, the motive of this volume is to do something toward clearing up the question, How did the four Gospels come to be, in manner and form, as they are? What is here written could not have been thought out without the help of others in all past time, and I

hope that in future times others may eliminate what there may here be of error, supply what there may be of deficiency, and that the truth, so made perfect, may abide when I am forgotten.

Inquiry into the construction of the Gospels meets with difficult questions: thus, in the Gospels, there is apparently the witness of only two of the Twelve; where is that of the Ten? And why is our Lord's ministry in Judea, until the week of his passion, passed over by three of the Evangelists? The answers here given to these and other questions may be of use in the present debate as to the Scriptures; and, apart from any transitory worth as defensive against assaults upon the Bible that will in time of themselves come to nothing, a true insight into the construction of the Gospels is of lasting value, because of its emphatic, and, at times, surprising confirmation of some of the higher truths of our holy religion.

I hold to the religious worth of this volume with the more confidence, because the greater part of its material is drawn from the Gospels. If it elucidates its subject, it could be drawn from no other source. Some few important facts concerning their construction rest, in the main, on historical evidence, though having confirmation from Scripture; yet I think that in the end my friendly and tireless reader will be convinced that for a general state-

ment this is true: Almost all that can be known of the construction of the Gospels comes from the Gospels themselves; tradition adds little to what, in one way or another, can be made out from what they hint at or from what they say.

The Gospels are the monuments of their own history. There is no record of their generation; but there they are, eternal as the hills, of whose generation there is also no record. The memory of man runneth not to the time when the mountains were brought forth; yet geologic theory, by means of facts inwrought into their fabric, so well explains their formation as to be received as their true history. In like manner, the true theory of the construction of the Gospels may be discovered through facts inwrought into themselves.

Once it was thought that the mountains were made by direct volition, no time elapsing, no agencies employed. We now think differently; and, though created mind knows nothing of what creation may be in itself, yet hints in nature and in revelation encourage man to trace the ongoings of the force called into creative action by the Eternal Word in those great days described by the Prophet Micah as "days of eternity." In those six days He made all things through forces by him called into being, and put under world-times and laws. Science cannot go behind that "beginning" and

stand with God in the secret chamber of creative energy; still it can discern the power of the Word of God, as manifest through the work of his agencies, in the forming worlds. This difficult knowledge of the discoverable ways of the forces through which he made the worlds, lessens not our sense of the glory of the creating Word who called into being the earth and the heavens. In like manner our sense of the divine glory, abiding in, and outshining from, the holy Gospels, is heightened by wisely tracing there the free-will of man, made subject to, and working in harmony with, the will of God.

THOUGHTS ON THE HOLY GOSPELS.

PART FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

OPENING THE WAY.

THE significance of a first official act is foreshadowing. Christ Jesus was Son of God and Son of man, and his ministry began with two official acts pointing onward and opening out in the future. On the first of these light falls from the beginning of the written word. Through the temptation of a being of another order, the first pair of the true human race, enlightened by the true light, fell from innocence; in that hour of ruin to them and to all who should descend from them by ordinary generation, there was a mysterious promise of a Redeemer of woman born; and, "in the fullness of time," the One foretold as the Son of the Virgin was led into the wilderness of Sinai by the Spirit of God to be tempted of the devil. His victory over Satan was the first official act of the Son of God and Son of man, who was made manifest that he might destroy the devil and his works.

When he came up out of the desert the first official act of the Son of God and Son of man was to

call witnesses to himself. This he did before he preached any sermon, before he wrought any miracle. Even in the days of the Baptist (though some deny this) He had marked out his lines of action. Even in that early time he had in mind fitting memorials of himself—the living congregation and the written word.

The first official act of *his witnesses* was of similar significance. Their Lord had said, "Ye shall bear witness of me, because ye have been with me from the beginning;" and, because of their like qualification for the office, the eleven selected Justus and Matthias, that one of them might be a chosen witness, instead of the traitor, who had gone to his own place. The first official act of the Apostles, then, proves that it was their office to bear witness that Jesus is the Christ; and (as will be seen hereafter) the Holy Spirit led them, in fulfilling their witness, to record so much of the life of the Lord on earth as is written in the four Gospels, and no more.

It is reasonable to hope that on the occasion of the choice of Matthias, some of the disciples' ideas concerning the fulfilling of their office may (not formally perhaps, yet naturally) appear, in what was then said, as well as in what was done. And St. Peter's saying, that one must be chosen, who, with his brethren and himself, should witness to the Resurrection, shows that with St. Peter the Resurrection was the pre-eminent sign that Jesus was the Christ—as, indeed, Jesus himself had taught his disciples.

Here it may be well to inquire into the meaning and significance of the Resurrection to the Disciples. Of the state of the departed they had the notions common to the people of their country and time. While their Master's body lay dead in the garden-sepulcher they knew he still lived in the spirit, as surely as Moses and Elias lived, whom three of them had seen. They were familiar with the idea of a ghost; and the appearing of their dead Master's spirit would have revealed to them only what they believed before. They distinguished between such an apparition as Samuel's ghost, and a man living again. St. Thomas was slow to believe, because he knew how great was the wonder of the unhoped-for, unlooked-for coming back of Jesus in the flesh. Some of its phenomena were ghost-like; yet at last all his Disciples were sure that their Master lived again in the body that was crucified; and, therefore, they were sure that he had prevailed over death as never man prevailed. His still living in the spirit, if it were any victory over death, would have been a victory common to all who died. It would have been no triumph over the grave befitting the only begotten Son of God; but his coming back *as a man* was such a triumph.

This witness of the Disciples fully meets the unbelief in the Resurrection which takes it to have been unreal though it seemed a reality to them. That unbelief conjectures that a phantom seemed to appear to the over-excited minds of some of the friends of the murdered prophet, as to Brutus Cæsar's ghost appeared, or to Macbeth the air-drawn

dagger. Because the hysterical Magdalene thought she saw something others thought they saw something; and those stories lost nothing in the telling, lost nothing in the lapse of time. Around this ingenuity there can be thrown a taking air of superiority to common superstitions, but it does not meet the facts in Scripture or in history. Such an ineffectual ghost would only have caused a passing spasm of wonder and fright; and what is most real in the world's life came not from unreality.

The Resurrection meant more to the Disciples than that Jesus was alive again. The son of the widow of Nain lived again in body and spirit; so did Lazarus; yet they lived subject, as before, to the laws of space and time, and to die again and to be buried, as other men are buried. The Lord lived again in body and spirit, *a man;* yet a man not subject to the common wants and the common lot of humanity.

The Resurrection meant even more than this to his disciples. Christ Jesus took again the life he had laid down, and therefore they knew that over him the power of death had only been through his own will. By his Resurrection he was declared to be the Son of God. His resurrection revealed that he could deliver from sin, and from death the consequence of sin. With his resurrection the wondering eyes of his disciples began to open to that triumph of Jesus over both sin and death, which led St. Paul to cry out, in words that millions will make their own, until the sounds are lost in the good-cheer of the last trumpet: "O death! where is thy

sting! The sting of death is sin, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

The whole of Christianity is bound up with the resurrection of Christ Jesus as a man. His resurrection, when taken with the reason for his life on earth, and with the dominion given to the risen Christ over things created because he was obedient unto death, is prophetic of the dominion to be given to the new race of men, who, attaining to the resurrection in the likeness of their Redeemer, are to be "joint-heirs with Christ." All these things, known or foreknown, helped to form the Disciples' idea of that Resurrection which was their great evidence that Jesus was the Son of God; and it is to this Resurrection, (so unknown to their thoughts before,)—to this Resurrection of Christ Jesus as a man, yet as a man clothed with power over all things in heaven and in earth—to this glorious Resurrection of Christ, with all its far-reaching consequences to all who are born again in his likeness, and to all the intelligences of the one indivisible universe—that his Disciples testify. Such is the Resurrection that was made known to them "by infallible proofs," and that may now be known to all by their witness, and by the indwelling of Christ in the heart, and by his control of all human events.

The death of Christ Jesus on the cross was witnessed by men and women who had followed him from Galilee, by the citizens of Jerusalem, by the Jews who came to the Passover, and by soldiers of Rome. His Resurrection was not so open; but

every eye shall see the risen Lord when he comes to judge the quick and the dead. Of that hour no man knoweth, and until that hour his Resurrection will remain a fact that men may receive or may reject. Of that fact the Disciples are the witnesses chosen by Christ himself; and I hold this to be one of the first and greatest of questions touching the origin and construction of the Gospels, *How did the Disciples try to prove that fact? In what did they find the evidence of the Resurrection to consist?* The true answer, which sets the Gospels in a somewhat new light, comes from the Apostles themselves, and can be determined only by their words and acts.

Now, what St. Peter said on the occasion of the choice of Matthias, proves that the Disciples thought that their witness to the Resurrection, *in the main, consisted of their witness to the life of Christ Jesus before his crucifixion.* For the chief of the Disciples did not say that the new witness must be that one of the outer circle who had been most favored with the presence of the Crucified; he did not say he must be Cleophas or his companion, with whom the risen Christ had talked on the way to Emmaus, and to whom He made himself known in the breaking of the bread; he did not say he must be one of the five hundred by whom He was seen at once. He did not put forward any such qualification. He had something different in mind; for he said that he must be chosen from those who had "companied with the Disciples all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, even from the bap-

tism of John." *Why from among those?* The sequence of his thoughts, and their sweeping clear back to the days of John, make it certain that his answer to this question would have been, *Because the life of Jesus before his crucifixion is convincing evidence that he could not be holden of death.*

Since this is so, skeptics do not understand the case made out by the Disciples. The main evidence they bring forward to prove their Master risen from the dead is not what skeptics take it to be, when they say that the testimony to the Resurrection is too slight to prove so wonderful a fact. Underlying this is the reasonable idea that no common testimony of the senses can establish a fact so out of the common course of things. Judging by their tone in speaking, for example, of the raising of Lazarus, they think that such a phenomenon could only be proved, so as to command belief, by a scientific commission that should ascertain, by every known test, that a man was dead, and then, in the same way, that he was alive again. And there is sense in this; for though, concerning such broad and easily-ascertainable facts as life and death, common observation may be nearly or quite as conclusive as scientific experiment, still it may well be doubted whether common observation, or scientific experiment, or both united, could establish to the general satisfaction a special fact so out of the general course of things as the resurrection of a man. The skeptic is right as to the almost insuperable difficulty of proving the Resurrection of Jesus by the testimony of the fallible human senses. He is

wrong in thinking this was not as well known to the Disciples as to himself; and he is wrong in thinking that *their main reliance* was on such evidence.

The Chief of the Twelve knew the insufficiency of such evidence *alone*, for he knew the fallibility of the human senses as well as any man knows it. As to that fallibility St. Peter uttered the coolest opinion a man ever uttered. He had seen his Lord transfigured; he had seen Moses and Elias as they talked with Him; and he no more doubted those things than he doubted his own existence. He would have denied his own existence as soon as he would have denied what he had seen; and yet, while declaring that his testimony to the wonders in the Holy Mount was no "cunningly devised fable," he said, "*Yet we have a more sure word of prophecy.*" That is, the Chief of the Apostles would not trust, nor would he have us trust, to the testimony of one man of fallible senses, though that man was himself, as he trusted, and as he would have us trust, in the concurring voices of the whole volume of prophecy.

It is hardly less instructive that St. Matthew, in the brief record of all the testimony of the senses to the Resurrection that he thought it needful to give, mentions that of those who saw and heard the risen Christ "some doubted." He must, then, have been intelligent of the insufficiency of such testimony; and the construction of the last chapter of his Gospel proves he knew as well as St. Peter that the Resurrection did not rest on such evidence alone, and that the evidence of that wonder and

sign only became entirely sufficient when other testimony of a broader and higher kind was combined with that of the senses.

The disciples were not the "visionaries" that some would like to make them out. Of the strong and the wise not many are called; but such are called when there is work to be done that only the strong and the wise can do. And the natural gifts of the Disciples were such that, through the enlarging influence of great events, and through all the holy influences that wrought within them, they could and did become great men, and of a greatness the like of which was never known before or since.

And here, *while breaking the ground and marking the way*, let me further illustrate the bearing of this study of the Gospels on the questionings of doubt and unbelief, by what I find to have been the fact, that in the minds of the Evangelists the need of the testimony of the senses to the Resurrection was reduced to a *minimum* by the life of their Lord before his crucifixion. "In their light seeing light," that life is seen to be testimony to His Resurrection of so high an order, that although it does not supersede that of the senses, it reduces to the very least the need of any such testimony. For a man reading the Gospel for the first time, and by grace believing, would be almost sure, before he came to the end, that if the Lord laid down his life he would take it again. The wonder of his Resurrection *as a man* fits exactly the wonder of his life *as a man*. That the Eternal Word, though in the form of man, con-

sented unto death, is the most incredible of all things; yet, as he did consent to the dishonor of the grave, it is most credible that he rose from the grave in the same body that died; for only by his Resurrection *in the same body* could his victory over sin and death *be a divinely complete victory.*

In these facts is the reason for what now tries the faith of so many, that even the earliest Evangelist did not give more of the human evidence of the Resurrection. To St. Matthew's mind it may have seemed—to his mind, touched by the Spirit, it could not but have seemed—that, after what he had written of the life of the Son of God, there was very little need of such evidence. And the more the soul is in sympathy with St. Matthew, the more it learns from him how it ought to feel, the better it understands his treatment of the time after the crucifixion, and the more that treatment commends itself to the reason. The resurrection was such an inevitable consequence of the life of the Lord that the wise evangelist knew it was needless to accumulate other evidence—that to do this would weaken rather than strengthen the evidence he gave. He knew the force of his evident conviction, that, by those to whom he had made known the life of the Lord, only so little of all the evidence at his command was needed. And this feeling on the part of St. Matthew is an element in his testimony that is of almost irresistible power. Every one feels its force, whether they understand the nature of it or not. In human testimony there can hardly be a greater power than the word of such a witness.

The reason for the silence of St. Matthew and also of St. John, as to the Ascension, is of the same kind. They felt that all those who read their Gospels, without being told would know that the Lord from heaven had again ascended into heaven; and the effect of that conviction is the same.

To St. Matthew the dwelling of the Lord with his people in the Spirit, the "Lo, I am with you alway," so transcended His departure from them in the body, as to make that departure of little moment in comparison. He knew that if he then described the Ascension it would lessen the impressiveness of that promise. The reasons for describing the Ascension grew stronger with time: the Gospel of St. Mark speaks of it, and St. Luke describes it twice; but the earlier Christian generations were in such fine accord with St. Matthew's feeling that, for four hundred years, they did not keep the festival of the Ascension.

In his last short chapter St. Matthew completes his proof of the Resurrection; and there his main intent is to give the evidence of the Resurrection in the time *after* the Crucifixion, as, in all his Gospel before, he had given the evidence of it in the time *before* the Crucifixion. In that short chapter he proves the Resurrection by the testimony of the senses, in his characteristic way combining brevity and fullness. And in that chapter he also gives further evidence of it. This evidence is, that Christ is ever with his people; and from its being the *last* word of his Gospel, it may, perhaps, be right to conclude that he felt it to be his *strongest* evidence.

In that chapter, though his intent be *directly* to prove the Resurrection, he fears not to tell that even of the witnesses to the risen Lord some doubted; for he knew there was proof of the Resurrection in the words, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," that surpassed all other—a proof that would be personal proof to every one of his people, inwrought into their consciousness, written on their hearts, attested by their lives; a kind of proof that, losing nothing by time, would grow stronger to the end of the world.

St. Paul recites another kind of testimony to the risen Lord: how He was seen by Peter, by James the Lord's brother, by all the Disciples; how He was seen by five hundred of the brethren at once, and by himself. He knew full well the value and the need of such testimony of the senses; yet how much more satisfying the witness within his own soul, when he said, "It is not I that live, but Christ who liveth in me!" St. Matthew knew of that kind of testimony as well as St. Paul; and, to make more impressive its pre-eminent worth, he did not close his Gospel, as otherwise he might well have done, with the Ascension. He closed his Gospel with the promise of the Lord to dwell forever with his people—a promise to whose fulfillment the holy and universal Church doth ever bear witness. He closed his Gospel with revealing that for his people Christ forever reigns: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

AND yet the behavior of the Disciples, while their Master's body lay in the sepulcher, so contradicts the truth that the life of Christ Jesus before his Crucifixion is evidence of his Resurrection, that it needs to be well considered. They did not hope to see him alive again; even the favored Three, who beheld his glory in the Holy Mount, had no such hope. The Jews, remembering something that sounded to them like a prediction that he would rise again, set a watch over the sepulcher; but, though the Master had more than once told his Disciples that he should die and rise again the third day, his words were then as if he had not said them.

With a show of reason, skeptics say, that, had those words been spoken, there could not have been that despair; and that those oracles must have been imagined or devised after the belief in his Resurrection sprang up. But in the mental states of the Disciples there are veins of psychological evidence for the truthfulness of the Gospels not as yet worked out. Their relation to their Master is not the simple problem it may seem to be. It is strange that they could have been so ignorant of Messianic prophecy—but there is such ignorance of Messianic prophecy even now. They had learned from the prophets that the Messiah would be a king; but not that he would enter on his reign through death. That the seed is not quickened except it die, which has taught us so little, had as yet taught them nothing. They understood, even less than we, that the path of life is

through the gate-ways of death. The reproof of two of the outer circle of his Disciples by the risen Lord fitted them all: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not the Christ to have suffered?"

The Disciples thought their Master was to be so holy, so wise and great a king, that all the earth in him would be blessed, yet still a king like kings of the earth. Before them visions passed. "We have forsaken all," said Peter; "what shall we have?" Salome asked that when Jesus sat on his throne one of her sons might sit on his right hand, the other on his left hand; and the Ten were in a rage when they found out that, through their mother's solicitation, James and John had secretly tried to secure the two best places beforehand. All this came suddenly to an end. Their selfish, earthly hopes and desires were destroyed by their Master's unlooked-for death, and their better thoughts, feelings, and memories went down in the wreck.

The manifestation of their Lord was compressed into a short space of time. They could not keep up with its divine swiftness. The contrast between what they looked for and what came was too much for them. Their souls were prostrate before marvels too quick, too near, too awful for comprehension. When Peter was told to put up his sword he could not understand it. His Master seemed to have forsaken Himself, and he forsook his Master. When Peter swore he did not know the man, what he meant as a lie very nearly expressed his own feeling, and that of the others, at the time. The

helplessness of those children when their Master died was as natural as their desertion when he suffered himself to be led away prisoner. Their desertion was weakness, not treachery; their helplessness was stupefaction, not despair. Their desertion does not prove they were destitute of love; their helplessness does not prove that they had no faith.

They no more knew what their Master meant when he told them he should die, than little children know what their mother means when she talks of her own death. They were afraid to ask the meaning of the dark saying. "Lord, it shall not be," they said, as some faint glimpse of his purpose shone into their minds. Even this passed away. They would not, and they could not, understand him. Their Master knew this so well that he did not try to make them. They would not, they could not, think He would die. Surely not then! surely not as he told them! Whatever his meaning, it could not be that. He was in the prime of life, not worn by sickness, not bent by time! and what were mortal enemies to Him, whom death obeyed! Some men are so full of vitality that we almost feel as if they could not die. The disciples had a similar, but stronger, feeling as to their Master. They felt that death could have no power over such a manner of man; and there was a depth of wisdom in the feeling! The Lord laid down his life; no man took it from him. The light was so near his Disciples as to dazzle their eyes. No men could have been at home, at once, in the new world they

had entered; and their bewilderment, though at times contrasting strangely with the quickness of others, was that of minds struggling to comprehend, and is evidence of latent intelligence rather than of stupidity.

These considerations may help us to understand the Disciples; but their bad behavior at the trial of their Master, and their despair while his body lay in the tomb, cannot be rightly judged, nor their history be made consistent, apart from the fact that the fullness of the time of the Holy Ghost was not till after the resurrection. When I said that the life of Christ is convincing evidence of his resurrection, I meant that it is so when the Holy Spirit interprets and makes it real. After the Pentecost that life was shown by the Spirit to the Disciples as they had not seen it before. They had seen it part at a time; then it was seen as a whole; then it was seen in its true relations to the past and to the future; and then they knew that Christ came into the world to die for the world.

The change from helplessness to strength, from hopelessness to courage, was marvelous; but equally marvelous the sudden enlargement of their knowledge of what the law foreshadowed and the prophets foretold of their Master, and the change in their ideas of his kingdom. The Disciples were not the men they had been. They breathed another atmosphere; they lived in another world. These great changes were brought about by the Resurrection and by the coming of the Holy Ghost. As it has so often been clearly shown by others, they

explain, and nothing else can explain, the sudden transformation of Disciples into Apostles.

From the Epistle to the Hebrews, which was written while the Temple stood, the suddenness of the intellectual change in the Disciples may be inferred, and also the breadth of that change. That Epistle brings out meaning in the old types and prophecies of which the Disciples knew little before the coming of the Holy Ghost; and it teaches that the Christian religion is the completion of the Hebrew religion. It is true that, for a time, many Christians took themselves to be a Hebrew sect, and did not understand that only those Hebrews who received Jesus as the Messiah were true to the Hebrew religion, and that all the Hebrews who rejected Christ Jesus (by faith in whom Abraham and the prophets were saved) were apostates from the Hebrew religion. Bitter and long were the birth-pangs before the higher spiritual life of Christianity was fully severed from Judaism; and a hankering after the ritualism slain by the word spoken at the well of Jacob has not withered out of some Christian hearts; yet the Epistle to the Hebrews sets forth the faith of the Christian congregation even at the time when it was written.

Now, long before that Epistle to the Hebrews, St. Matthew inwrought into his Gospel the truth, that in Christ Jesus the prophecy of a suffering Messiah, and of the spiritual glory of his kingdom, had passed into fact. And, though for three days the Disciples were like little children whose souls are paralyzed by the look of the dead, still the

earliest Gospel proves that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the life of Jesus soon became to his Disciples such evidence of his Divinity that, in their minds, his Resurrection passed from the roll of strange, incredible things into the roll of things of course.

CHAPTER II.

INTENT TO HAVE A WRITTEN GOSPEL.

SURELY it was not "the Archangel ruined" who deluded men into saying that the Witnesses never thought of putting their witness into writing! They must have been fooled by some imp, like Caliban. Can they prove that the alphabet was no more known to Jerusalem than before the days of Cadmus to the future Athens? Have they found out that the disciples were not men of their own race? Have they discovered they were not men at all? These things they must discover and prove to give a color even of possibility to their words. Men ever try to keep alive the memory of the great. The rude barrow as well as the obelisk or pyramid testifies to the human desire. The recording instinct is a part of the human nature, and the savage shows himself to be no brute by piling up stones to commemorate a chief.

The ancient genealogies of the people of whom the Witnesses were born, prove their record-keeping habit. Their people treasured up writings that were from before Abraham's day; they treasured up, in writing, the family histories of the patriarchs, and even the oracles of the false prophet whom

Moab called from the East to lay an *interdict* on Israel that would kindle up the warlike zeal of its enemies into mad fanaticism.

The unrolling of the Scriptures on every Sabbath made the use of books known to the most illiterate of that people. In the schools of the synagogues they all had the means of learning how to read and write. The Witnesses could secure the precision and permanency of their witness only by putting it in writing; and yet we are told to believe that they never thought of doing so! The demand awakens more of scorn even than of wonder; yet infidels, whether misunderstanding or misrepresenting, are curiously ingenious in arguing on the wrong side of every question—and let them be heard.

They strangely fancy that they were the first to mark that Jesus himself wrote nothing; and some of them intimate that he knew not how to write. Their argument requires this; and all they say of the origin of Christianity shows an ignorance of Hebrew civilization, dishonors the intelligence of the Disciples, and of our Master and theirs.

They go on to argue that, in spite of the words of the angel, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" the Witnesses kept on gazing till not only parchment but frail papyrus paper was too lasting for a memorial of Him whom they hourly looked to see coming as they had seen him go into heaven. They should learn how men act now, before ordaining, in the oracular tone of prophets, how men must have acted ages ago. There are some Christians now who fix the last Coming within a month or a

year, and yet they sign leases, build houses, and marry off their children. Like them, some of the early Christians fixed the time of the world's end too definitely. To such in Corinth St. Paul wrote, that a train of events must pass before the last Great Day, whose time none could foreknow; and his epistle was soon read in all the Christian congregations. On every side there are persistent misrepresentations of their belief; but, certainly, it was not such as to prevent their taking thought for the morrow. St. Paul was busy with large plans, and the march of the Gospel, more rapid than his journeyings, shows the spirit of the Congregation.

They give in the tradition of the elders as another piece of evidence. This is said to have been handed down *memoriter* from long before the days of the disciples until the revolt of the Jews in the reign of Hadrian, A. D. 117; then, after the Jews were driven out of the Holy Land, this tradition, for safe keeping, was entombed in the ten folios of the Talmud. But that before this there were no secret rolls, for the use of the scribes, is no more to be believed on the word of Oriental wonder-loving chroniclers, than their equally credible story that the whole tradition came down by word of mouth from the days of Moses.

Jewish ecclesiastics took no pay; but in some indirect ways it was for their profit to dispense their traditions to the people, *and this was the reason* why they kept their dissemination in their own hands. But in withholding any knowledge from the people they went contrary to the spirit of the Hebrew re-

ligion; and the children of the Crucified were not in a frame of mind to copy the example of the scribes. They did not preach for the sake of gold, nor did they wish to keep their Master's teachings to themselves. "The Bride," as well as "the Spirit," said, "Come," and whosoever would might "come and take of the water of life freely."

As stronger evidence that the Disciples never thought of a written Gospel, use is made of some curious coincidences that modern research has found in the wording of the three earlier Gospels. Every one has noticed that in the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke there are parts of verses so much alike as to give a common coloring to their style. When such verses were laid side by side in the Greek, it was seen (to state the case in a very general way) that four or five words were just the same, then that some were not the same, and then, again, that there were like coincidences and differences. In those mosaics pieces of older writings seemed to be put together; but a closer scrutiny proved that those coincidences were best accounted for by an oral Gospel, that is, a Gospel taught by word of mouth. Such is the accepted opinion; still, there are those who think that some of those coincidences indicate that the three earlier Evangelists made some use of common memoranda.

Skeptics argue that this discovery goes to prove that long after the time of the Disciples the Gospels were constructed out of traditions: and thus when they find, or think they find, a new fact, they always set to work. It may be easy to harmonize it with

the truth, but this they never try to do, because they never want to. The discovery of those coincidences can thus be harmonized; and if the earnest thought that has been given to the construction of the Gospels since it was made had been given earlier, the substance of what it made known would have been known before. For the Witnesses must at once have taught the sacrificial death of the Lord, and the evidence of his glorious resurrection in his life before his crucifixion, by word of mouth, to men and women, as they are now taught to children. Such teaching was called for, at once, by the need of the time. Oral teaching has ever been the favorite mode of Oriental teaching; and as children like better to hear than to read about the child Moses, or about Joseph and his brethren, so the early Christians liked better to hear than to read the wonderful story. This feeling lasted long; some fifty years after St. John died, the child-like Papias confessed that he profited more by what he heard than by what he read.

For a time the Gospel was committed to memory, as chapters are now for the Sunday-school, though, of course, the mode of learning was different; and thus the Gospel then was universally and thoroughly written on the hearts of the old and of the young. As manuscripts were costly, and as many of the Jewish and more of the Gentile converts could not read, such teaching and learning continued for a long time; still this oral Gospel of itself makes it quite certain that there was a written apostolic Gospel. It was, in fact, a step toward it. For be-

fore any one writes out what he has witnessed, he questions his own memory, compares his recollections with those of others, and makes up his mind what to put into his record and what to leave out. This is precisely what the twelve *witnesses* did in framing their oral Gospels; and, in so doing, they were, somewhat unconsciously perhaps, yet effectually, preparing in the quickest and best way for a perfect written Gospel. And their oral Gospels must soon have taken on a somewhat fixed, complete and common form. For the twelve Witnesses lived together in the same town with the purpose of framing the Gospel, they were busy in recalling and arranging its facts, which were fresh in their memories, and they heard each other as they taught them.

At that time there were more in Jerusalem who could write than there are now; and among the three thousand converts there must have been many who could have written out the oral teaching of the Witnesses. There must have been some who tried to do so; and to think that the writing out of the oral Gospel *could* have been put off till the second century is foolish, though some profess to believe it. It is so natural that some should have written out the Gospel, as they heard it from "the eye-witnesses" of the Lord, that it would be certain, even if St. Luke had not told us, that "many" took this "in hand."

No doubt such transcripts of the apostolic Gospel were unsatisfactory; and the Witnesses must then have seen, if they had not seen before—which is not

possible—that it was their duty to have the Gospel properly written out by one or more of themselves. The re-discovery then of the oral Gospel, which is but little more than a clearing up of what the Fathers say of ancient tradition, confirms the apostolic writing of the Gospel.

Some of the Asiatics thought that a religion and a book went together. The Arabian Jews were held in more esteem in Arabia because they were "the People of the Book." Mohammed availed himself of this feeling as to a book-religion. The Koran was for him in lieu of miracles. It made the Arabs a people with a book, like the Persians and the Hebrews; and after they had "the Book of Islam" they treated the peoples who had no sacred book as utter heathen. I can think of no way of accounting for such facts, save as the wide-spread and abiding effect of immemorial veneration for sacred writings; such as, in Chaldea, came down to Abraham from an eye-witness of the judgment of the great flood. Those who had failed to keep such writings, honored those who had kept them. Those who had them, kept them as heir-looms of their nationality as well as for their religious worth. The feeling as to a book-religion was as rooted with the Hebrews as with any of the Asiatics: and its effect upon the apostles may be worth thinking of. And so, too, the fact that there was less culture in Arabia in the days of the camel-driver of Medina than in Palestine in the days of the Disciples.

The full exposure of the error that the Disciples could not have thought of writing out the Gospels

would require a treatise on the civilization of the Jews, bringing out the causes of the mental activity among them that is seen in the New Testament. The like of this activity there was not among any other people. Their familiarity with their Scriptures was wonderful, and it was common to all classes. Thought among the rabbins was fettered, but the thought of the people was more free.

To the pedants of the capital John was an "ignorant and unlearned man;" and so was Shakspeare to the pedants of the court of King James. The citizens of the capital jeered at the Galilean brogue of Peter; so did the gentry of Edinburgh at the broad Scotch of the plowman Burns. The Corsican could not write French grammatically, but taught French from the mouth of his cannon; and, though he was almost of our own time, scholars wonder and blunder over the history he made. In all ages and in all countries God ordains that men shall rise up from the stones of the street, who, by force of their natures, seize, with firm hands, on such appliances of their time as suit their ends, and with them they work out, consciously or unconsciously, the purposes of the Lord.

It is said that in the day and generation of the disciples "the literary instinct was not at work among the Jews," and yet in the Gospels of Matthew and John it did the best of work—though, happily, this is lost sight of in the truth that their Gospels are creations of God, rather than works of man. In that generation the literary instinct among the Jews did good work such as men may do.

There were then Jewish men of letters: there was Justus of Tiberias, whose historical books are lost, and the loss is great; Josephus, who, like Matthew, wrote in Greek and Hebrew; and Philo of Alexandria, who, like all the apostles save St. Matthew, wrote in Greek. How far the culture of Philo bears upon the question as to the culture of the Jews of Palestine somewhat depends upon the intercourse of the Alexandrian Jews with their mother country, and it also somewhat depends upon the extent to which the Greek language was in use among the Jews of Palestine in the days of the Disciples; it is therefore too complicate a matter to be here considered:—and it will suffice to say, that one such man of letters as Josephus refutes the error that, in his time, there was no literary instinct at work among the Jews. As showing this, and to give the few words concerning his relation to Christian facts and records which properly come into this volume, I reproduce what I wrote years ago, marking in italics some lines that are very pertinent to the subject before us.

The true idea of the character of Josephus is not that of good old credulous Whiston, nor is it that of the fiery crusader, De Quincey. Josephus was no Christian, neither was he half renegade and all traitor. He was a politician as adroit, as lucky, as Talleyrand. He was a man of letters as industrious as Gibbon. His character is not pleasing, but it may be said, in his defense, that his lot was cast in a time when no course could have been consistent and right. His sympathies were

with his own people; but, like the rest of the Jewish nobles, like even the citizens of Jerusalem, he knew that the fanaticism blazing out among the country people, if unchecked, would destroy the State. And this young, wealthy, and popular nobleman accepted the command of the army of Galilee with a secret determination to pacify the province, or, at least, to keep things as they were until wiser counsels should prevail, or the overwhelming array of the army of Titus should compel even fanaticism to abandon its wild designs. No doubt the cool policy which saved only himself is justly odious to enthusiastic minds. He should have delivered one great battle in the passes of Galilee, or, at least, should have died when his brethren died in Jotapata. The sympathies of honorable men are not with him, but with those who fell in the slaughter at Tarichea or at the siege of Gamala, when the Galileans repulsed the Roman army, Vespasian fighting as in his youth, and striving, sword in hand, to rally his battalions, hurled down the steep slope of the city by the fury of Israel. Such a death would have been more heroic than to have come, less as a captive than a prince, high in favor with the Emperor, before the walls of indignant Jerusalem. And no doubt, had the writings of Justus of Tiberias been preserved, they would have darkened the fame of his rival and enemy, Josephus. But the fact was, that this aspiring noble, like the rest of his order, saw and felt the desperation of the conflict with Rome, and countenanced the popular movement only to control it, and to end the war by making it

as hopeless in seeming as it was in reality. Still, his policy cannot be wholly approved. It is the more repulsive to the feelings because for him it was fortunate; and but for one great fact, redeeming all, his character would be devoid of dignity. He did not despair of his country when he had no country. As a soldier or a politician Josephus is not admirable, but his course as a historian verges on the sublime; for just at the time when the eyes of the shuddering world are averted with horror from the destruction of Jerusalem, *he makes a calm, learned, majestic appeal to the mind of the world in behalf of Israel. Though he had seen his race almost perish before his eyes he does not despair of his race; but, with enduring faith in its fortunes, this scholar sets himself to win with the pen the battle lost with the sword.* He wrote in the universal tongue their history, to vindicate for them an honorable place among the nations.

The writings of Josephus were begun and finished while he enjoyed the favor of Roman emperors. To his history of the Jewish war there was affixed the signature of Titus. Yet his writings went forth at a time when Hebraic ideas and the Hebraic character were detested in Rome; and writing when he did, where he did, and with his aims, there were ideas and facts that could find no place in his writings. He makes no mention of Christ, none of the ancient Jewish belief in the Messiah, neither of which could have been unknown to him, and the last of which was but too well known to the Romans. A knowledge of the religious ideas of their

subject nations was part of the state-craft of Rome, and the sagacious historian felt that, if he would avert from his race aught of Roman jealousy, he must, in such an hour, be cautious as to that great Hope. And he was silent concerning it, seeing into what calamities it had led his race, and, perhaps, foreboding the calamities it was to bring upon them in the time of Hadrian.

Neither the recondite philosophical ideas of the Hebrews, nor their more spiritual ideas, nor even the latent causes of the great war with Rome, are to be found fully unfolded in this Romanized Hebraic history; yet this does not entirely destroy the dignity of its intent. Josephus built a monument that will outlast the arch of Titus. Though despised and hated by his countrymen, he was, at heart, all Jew. If he received an estate in Judea from Vespasian, if he kept the favor of Titus and Domitian, it was because he meant to be of service to his own people. He had the craft, the versatility, the enduring courage, of his race. He belonged not to the devout of his nation; he had no more sympathy with heroic elevation of soul, or with spiritual emotions, than Macaulay; no more conception of the glories of the Hebrew religion than Gibbon had of the glories of Christianity. He was as graphic as the one, as voluminous as the other, and his history will outlive theirs. He was the first of those Jews who, ever since the destruction of Jerusalem wearing a mask, disguising their Hebraic feelings, giving no full utterance to their Asiatic ideas, yet true, in their hearts, to their own race, have been

familiar with palaces, and have had more or less to do with the course of events.

I trust that before my friendly and tireless reader comes to the close of this volume he will find the question whether the Witnesses meant to put their witness in written form settled more conclusively than it can be by those general considerations showing its probability, to which some thought had to be given in the present state of inquiry as to the Gospels; yet it may be well here to refer to one piece of direct evidence of this intent of the Apostles. With intelligence, born of faith in the governing of the Most High, the Hebrews placed their historic in the same class with their prophetic writings. Through all the history as well as through the oracles of their sacred book, there ran a foretokening and a foretelling of Christ Jesus, as he told the Jews, when he said, "Your Scriptures testify of Me." The burden of the message of their sacred book, whether in type, or psalm, or prophecy, or history, was the Prophet greater than Moses, the Messiah to come in the power of God for the salvation of his people. Such a book called aloud for a book that should recite the fulfilling of itself in Christ Jesus, and *the construction of his Gospel* proves that Matthew heard and answered that call.

CHAPTER III.

THE RECEIVED DATE OF THE GOSPELS.

THE infidel assumption, so madly echoed by some of the orthodox divines, that the Apostles never thought of a written Gospel, is made for the purposes of debate. Infidel writers see it is needed to open the way for their assumption that the Gospels are later than the days of those who wrote them. They also assume that scholars only can tell whether they are later or not, and that they are the only scholars.

Yet even in those Gospels themselves there is some evidence of their date that is as much within the reach of one man as of another. Thus, St. Luke wrote the Acts after he wrote his Gospel; in his later treatise he brings down the missionary life of St. Paul near the time of his martyrdom; but does not speak of that; hence it is plain that St. Luke stopped writing while St. Paul yet lived.

The Gospels now are read in all Christian assemblies, and that such has ever been the usage in all past Christian centuries, as far back as A. D. 175, (within about seventy-five years after St. John died,) is as certain as that the sun shone in those centuries. But when we would trace this publi

reading of the Gospels back to its origin, we find that after the burning of Jerusalem there were well nigh a hundred busy and luminous years that to us are dark and silent years. Within very near the time when those warned by the word on Mount Olivet fled from the city, the ongoings of Christianity, in much of the Roman world, are known from the New Testament, *and then they are lost to sight.* The feeling that comes with the change has well been likened to that of the traveler who, journeying through the gates of a city in a wilderness, passes out from the busy life inside the wall into the sudden stillness of the desert.

The conversion of the empire was going on; but, save that the younger Pliny, Proconsul of Bithynia, reports to the Emperor Trajan that in his province the worship of Christ had taken the place of the worship of the gods, the classic writers say nothing of the great fact; and until near the close of the second century the relics of Christian literature are scanty indeed. The few short letters and other documents of the apostolic Fathers could all be printed in two columns of a newspaper; and of all the Christian literature of the second century that remains, how little is the use in searching into the construction of the Gospels can be made plain by a single fact: from it all nothing can be learned of Theophilus, whether he was a man of rank, as the words "most excellent" may imply, or whether, as Origen and Ambrose thought, his name, "Lover of God," is a symbol pointing to the readers that St. Luke had in mind.

Scholars grope in the darkness of those silent years. But at the end of that time the facts do away with any cause for regret for that silence and darkness, so far as the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels are concerned. With the return of clear light the Christians are seen with our four Gospels in their hands. As soon as the silence is broken the Christians are all heard saying that those Gospels came down to them from the apostles, and in all their assemblies throughout the world the Gospels are read with those Hebrew Scriptures that were accredited by the Lord.

Numberless the words and works of the Lord unrecorded by his inspired Evangelists, yet no miracle has come down, no parable, and scarcely a word of his, that is not in the Gospels. Even the Epistles are as wanting in these as the leaves of the apostolic or the tomes of the later Fathers. It was the will of God that the sayings and doings of his Son should be told only by his own Evangelists. It was the will of God that even by them much should be left untold; and, with the miracle of silence that their Gospels are in the world of thought, there is an accordant miracle in the world of history. It was forbidden the Evangelists to tell all they knew of Jesus, and the same ordaining Will struck out forever the whole of that knowledge from the memory of man. And the sweep of the decree that the Gospels should never be confounded with human devices swept away nearly all of the history of the twelve Witnesses. Their work abides, their witness is in the Gospels, yet the names of some of

them are disputed, their journeyings are unchronicled, and their burial-places are now forgotten.

As we stand on this side and look back over the chasm, the ground is firm under our feet. The fathers and mothers of the Christians in the earlier half of the second century grew up in the lifetime of Apostles, and as late as A. D. 175 a man fifty years old might have remembered what his father heard from the beloved disciple, and his grandfather might have heard the Sermon on the Mount. Irenæus, (A. D. 175,) who bears witness to the use of our four Gospels throughout the world, was a pupil of Polycarp, who had known St. John. As the public use of the Gospels in the last quarter of the second century was universal, it must have begun much further back. Justin Martyr, the first Christian philosopher whose writings have come down with any completeness, states in a memorial to the Emperor, (A. D. 140,) that Gospels written by Apostles and companions of Apostles were read with the oracles of the prophets in all the Christian assemblies, on every Sabbath day. This witness of Justin carries the origin of that usage as far back as the time of the death of St. John.

Let us now take our stand on the farther side of the chasm, and mark how the tone of the Apostles accords with the height and breadth of their commission.

The short General Epistles of Peter speak to all classes in a kindly, brotherly way, yet in his precepts there is a breath of command like that in the word on the Mount. A like breath is in the words of all

the Apostles. Their writings were from the same Spirit with the writings of Moses and the Prophets, and they knew it. There is general evidence of this in all they wrote; and there is special evidence of it, when the chief Apostle says there are things in the Epistles of Paul which some wrest to their own destruction as they do the other Scriptures. Again: St. Paul, after reminding "his son" Timothy of the faith of his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice, and that, from a child, he had been taught "the holy Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," passes on, as was natural, from his speaking of faith in Christ, to his own writings and what had been written by his brethren, or sanctioned by them, and says, (when his words are rightly translated,) "All Scripture that is given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." St. Paul never uttered superfluous or needless words, and, to the child of Grandmother Lois and Mother Eunice, it would have been needless and superfluous thus to have spoken of the Hebrew Scripture.

The apostles never disparaged the gifts of the Holy Ghost, given to them alone, by thinking "that the Old Testament was a complete Bible, both doctrinally and historically." They wrote with all the authority of the prophets. This could not appear in those Gospels, that, with reverence for Him who is the Truth, were inscribed, not *the* Gospel—for that, in its fullness, is the secret of the Father—but the Gospel according to St. Matthew or according

to St. John; that is, so much of the Gospel as God was pleased to make known through men, and in part by one and in part by another. In those Gospels no word was suffered to call thought away, from the work God wrought, to his workmen; but, in their other writings, the Apostles declare that they write "by the commandment of God our Saviour and the Lord Jesus Christ." St. Paul speaks of his "Gospel"—which the Fathers say was written out by St. Luke—"and the preaching of Christ Jesus," of both as "the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began, but now made manifest;" then, that the Hebrew Scripture might not be undervalued, he says "it was also manifest by the prophets," and that these good tidings, alike new and old, "are to be made known to all nations." When spoken to in such a tone men will listen; and it is needless to prove, what every one knows from their own Epistles, that all the Apostles wrote was read by the Christians of that generation, with reverence and godly fear.

Were there ready means for writings, thus revered, to reach all the congregations then rapidly forming throughout the Roman world? At this point we again take issue with Westcott. He says, "The means of intercourse were slow and precarious," and one section of the table of contents, in his "Treatise on the Canon," runs thus: "Its formation was impeded by defective communication." Saying, as we pass on, that the final decrees of the Church, as to all the books of the New Testament, passed upon questions that it took longer to decide than any

there could have been as to the Gospels, I appeal, in proof of the facilities of intercourse in the apostolic generation, to what is seen of the intercourse of Christians in the Acts, in the General and other Epistles, and in the messages to the seven Churches of Asia. From Athens St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that their faith had sounded abroad, not only in Achaia and in Macedonia, but in all the world. A collection for the Christians in Jerusalem was taken up, not only in those two provinces, but in Galatia, and in Ephesus in Asia Minor, and in Antioch in Syria. Tidings from the brethren in Corinth, brought by those of Chloe's household, tidings from those in Galatia, come to Paul at Ephesus. All classes are moving about. An Asiatic slave, Onesimus, finds his way to Rome, and is sent back to Colosse to his master Philemon. Twenty messages are sent by Paul to men and women in Rome, whom he must have met with in other parts of the world, probably Jews driven out of that city by the edict of Claudius, but who had gone back again. Women travel as well as men. Phœbe, of Cenchrea, the busy port of Corinth, bears Paul's letter to the Romans, and they are told to receive her as Christ's people should receive their own, and to aid her wherein she needed help.

There were congregations at the four centers—Rome, Antioch, Ephesus, and Alexandria. A common government and free-trade made intercourse throughout the empire such, that the Christians in any country could readily send copies of each of the Gospels, in its turn, to any other country. Ro-

man energy had made all the provinces accessible from all the large cities. In the summer-time oar-driven galleys, little dependent on the folly of the winds, swiftly crossed the great mid-land sea, and recrossed from shore to shore. From the milestone, still at the capitol, there were roads to the borders of the Roman world. Those who have read Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel" will remember the night-ride of William of Deloraine, how man and horse struggled on through bog and mire, and along cattle-tracks, like the roads in Palestine, till they struck the pavement the legions laid, and man and horse took courage when

> "Broad and straight before them lay,
> For many a mile, the Roman way."

Roads still to be traced, like that to the Scottish hills, ran throughout Asia Minor, southward along the Syrian and African shores to the Arabian Deserts, to the land of the Nile, and eastward to the fortresses that watched for the coming of the Parthian horsemen from beyond the Tigris.

It was a civic world, of clustering cities, towns, and villages. Josephus speaks of hundreds of towns in the Canton of Galilee, where there was no metropolitan city, and whose towns were not closer together nor as large as in some other districts of the empire. If the world be compared with the Roman world, the dangers of travel then were no greater than they are now. There were then wild mountain regions, out-of-the-way places not easily visited nor safe; there were perils of robbers and perils of

the wilderness; but over all there was military rule, and there was no spot to which, if need were, the centurion did not find his way. Traveling is far more rapid, but, save for the telegraph, intercommunion now throughout the wider world of Columbus and Vasco de Gama, is not as quick nor is it more constant than it was throughout the world of the Cæsars.

Beyond its eastern borders, the multitude of Jews in the Chaldean plain and in the Persian highlands were known by pilgrimages and annual offerings to their countrymen in Jerusalem, until the fall of the city; and long afterward there were constant means of intercourse between the congregations in the East and the Far-East and those in the Roman world, through the channels of the trade of the Orient with Egypt and the West. There had then come to pass in the earth what the prophet beheld in vision, and what now seems coming to pass again on a broader scale in the earth. The way was prepared; in the desert was made straight the highway of our God; every valley exalted, every mountain brought low, that all flesh, together, might see the glory of the Lord.

There was no reason why the early intercourse of Christians should not have continued in the second century, and the little that is known of that dark time agrees with what was before and afterward:—as seen in the letter from the Romans to the Corinthians, in the Epistles of Ignatius, and in the recital, by the congregation in Smyrna, for the common good, of the martyrdom of Polycarp.

The next question is, whether the veneration for the writings of the Apostles was as great in the following generations as in their own—greater it could not be. And here we are concerned neither with the dissensions common to all movements that take hold on the souls of men, nor with the tares growing among the wheat, but only with the general feeling toward the Apostles and for what was written and sanctioned by them. Death usually strengthens veneration, but it could have added nothing to the veneration for the Apostles while living, and it took from it nothing. The scanty relics of the literature of the early Christian generations abound in evidence that the apostles were felt to be so apart from all others, that their writings came into a class by themselves. The tone of the time is that of Ignatius, who says of the Witnesses, they were Apostles, and himself, in comparison, as a man condemned. The Epistle of Barnabas, written within the verge of the first century, and generally ascribed to the brother "who took Paul by the hand," was not received into the canon of Scripture because the writer was not one of the Apostles, and his Epistle had not been sanctioned by them.

The veneration for the Witnesses was such as made it well-nigh impossible that any writing could have been generally received, as of equal authority with Hebrew Scripture, that was not written or sanctioned by them; and that the second and third Gospels are not directly from the chosen Disciples, is evidence that they date back to the times of the Disciples. St. Mark's Gospel breaks off at the eighth verse of

its last chapter, and was finished by another hand; yet this fragment, written by one who was not of the chosen *witnesses*, was held by the Christian congregation to be as authoritative as the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John! The reverence in which that Gospel has so long been held veils the strangeness of this fact, but the more we look into it the stranger it looks! And as to the third Gospel also, the facts are so strange, and so indisputable, that if we now heard of them for the first time we should neither know how to believe them or how to disbelieve them. A physician who was of the heathen-born wrote to another of the heathen-born, and the Christian congregation held what was written by this doctor to be equal with the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John! Such honor to the brethren points back to an early time; and it prophesies of that far-off time when the prayer of Moses shall be answered, and all Israel shall be kings and priests unto God!

Those two manuscripts of Mark and Luke never could have been received by the Congregation, as equal with the two apostolic Gospels, had not their inspiration been attested by one or more of the Apostles; and yet, in a late volume, "On the Beginnings of Christianity," it is said "that the second and third Gospels were ever submitted to apostles for their sanction is a proposition which no enlightened scholar would venture to affirm." Such enlightenment is darkness! And, if to deny the memory of the Church and the certain deductions of common sense from undisputed facts of history,

be among the insignia of the wise, let me be numbered among the foolish!

In any generation the common reception, by the Christian congregation, of the four Gospels, as written by those whose names they bear, so presupposes the witness of the apostolic generation to those Gospels, that, against this evidence of their genuineness and authenticity, nothing worth listening to can be said, if the Christians of the apostolic generation had honesty enough to pass honestly upon a matter where they had no reason or wish or opportunity to be dishonest; and if they had sense enough to pass upon that which required only plain common sense.

None sincerely question their honesty; yet there is a man, who, speaking of the earlier Christian ages, is depraved enough to say that "every thing was possible in those obscure epochs." This comes from the Parisian Jew who, writing in a city that knows less of the Bible than of every thing else, was pleased to show his contempt for Parisians by citing St. Matthew and St. Luke to prove that Jesus was born in Nazareth! An audacity, that evenly despises the witness of the holy evangelists and the intelligence of his readers, is characteristic of the libel he would put off on dull Nazarenes as a Life of Jesus. Renan imitates the persuasive ingenuity of Dumas, but his master keeps nearer to the possibilities of things! The exuberance of the romancer's glowing African imagination is overmatched by the Asiatic mendacity of the historian.

The Jew spits on the law for a purpose, and the

books of Moses become "the late frauds of pietistic kings." Now mark his transparent sneer! Jesus, whom Renan—forgetting the new city, seen from Capernaum, and named Tiberias in honor of the Emperor under whom our Lord was crucified—says was too stupid to know the name of the Cæsar to whom tribute was paid—this simple Jesus "thought he could do better."

Renan says, "the disciples invented the miracles of Jesus;" and that he was a party to this by "his innocent frauds;" as when he told the guileless Nathaniel that he knew his thought when he was under the fig-tree. Bad as he was, Renan says, he grew worse. His brain gave way; and his eulogist screens him from the sin of blasphemy by the plea of insanity. Yet he lets him keep enough of craft to connive at a deception planned by those sainted sisters, Mary and Martha. They made the Jews believe their young brother Lazarus was dead; and his coming from the tomb alive was a trick by means of which Jesus tried to gain the glory of a miracle! Yet this Renan, with boundless confidence in the stupidity of the Nazarenes, hails Jesus as Master and kisses him: "Jesus is a sublime person who each day presides over the destinies of humanity." These words mock at Jesus and at humanity! They do such honor to Jesus as did the scepter and the purple robe! This is the Renan whose before-quoted words hint at more than even he dared to say, for they mean that "in those obscure ages" any deception that a Jew can now think of was common in the family of Christ!

In the reception of some of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament throughout the Christian world, (that soon had the wide area of the Roman world,) there were local uncertainties that show how well such things were looked into; but that which accredited the four Gospels was of such supreme importance, that it must have been at once universally made known, and in such a way that it could have been reasonably doubted of none. The Apostles must have properly made known that, of the four Gospels, two were written, and two were sanctioned, by them. St. Paul calls attention to his signature, directs that his epistles be publicly read, and such care leaves no doubt of the proper care of the Apostles for documents of even greater importance. To think that the Apostles did not take care that the Gospels, emanating from them or authorized by them, were suitably authenticated and made known as such, (with however little of formality and parade,) is to charge them with unreasonable, unnatural, and gross neglect of their official duty. There could have been no uncertainty about the authority of the Gospels in the life-time of the Apostles, and as their authority was of such common concern and was so well attested by the reading of them with the Hebrew Scriptures, there could have been none after their life-time.

Their authentication, in each of the congregations, only presupposes such thought as is commonly given to matters of public importance; and it is slander to say that the early Christians were not intelligent enough to give to it all proper care. For

the most part, the congregations formed in the days of the Apostles were made up, in their beginnings, of the finest men of the finest of the ancient races. Their choice of an unpopular spiritual religion, in spite of prejudices and disadvantages, shows their thoughtful character. Many of the Jewish converts had sought their fortunes in foreign lands; they had the education common to the wealthier class of their countrymen; travel had sharpened their wits, and their minds were enlarged with experience of affairs.

The classic jeering at the Jews proves no more than the continental jeering at the British, and they cared as little for it. The Jews then looked with pride to a capital, that even the Romans said was "*longe clarissime*," far the most illustrious of the cities of Asia. They recalled the near glories of their war with the Greeks, as glorious as that of the Greeks with the Persians. They detested Herod, yet knew that he was far the greatest of the subject-kings of Rome; and that to his grandson, King Agrippa, the Emperor Claudius owed his life and throne. They felt something of their power as a people, but they were far from knowing it all. For when, a half a century after the fall of Jerusalem, the empire put forth its strength to crush out the Jews in Judea, (only a part of the Jewish race,) so fearful was the slaughter of his legions, that the Emperor Hadrian could not close his report to the Senate with, "*The army is well*"—the proud word of good cheer that in the end of other wars was the formula of Roman triumph. In this there was a foreboding of what

came to pass. For when the sword of divine justice cleft Judea, the heart of the Roman world, the body died; and the time came when the Seven Hills were without an inhabitant—like the rock of Zion.

The last conquest of the Jews tasked all the military strength of Rome, yet she then met only a fraction of the military power that the Jews could have put in the field. Had Jesus suffered himself to be a warrior-king, to his banner would have gathered the millions of the Jews of the East and the Far-East, the millions in Egypt, in Africa; with them would have come their kinsmen of the Desert; and, without superhuman aid, they could have prevailed as swiftly over the whole Roman world as a few centuries afterward the children of Ishmael alone did prevail over three quarters of that world. The dominion Satan offered to Jesus over all kingdoms, and the glory of them all, was quite within the natural possibilities of things.

Centuries of woe have told upon the strongest, the most enduring, of races; and those who paint the Ghettos in cities, where in misery and filth dwell those children of Abraham who for ages have suffered the worst legal and social degradation—who overcolor even their wretchedness, not out of spite to the Jews, but out of spite to the early converts from Judaism—and call it a picture of the Jewish quarter in Rome in the days of the Cæsars—they know history as they know religion.

In the Christian Scriptures there is no respect of persons, yet what may be learned from them and from other sources shows that in early Christianity, as

in all popular movements that have become lasting, there were some aristocrats who brought into it the characteristic forethought of their order. In Jerusalem a great company of the priests, in wealthy Corinth the ruler of the synagogue, and in royal Antioch the foster brother of the Tetrarch of Galilee, who, with the prince, was educated at Rome, "were obedient unto the faith." In the household of Cæsar, that city on the Palatine within the great city, there were Christians before Paul went to Rome. These were Jews in the domestic imperial service; but they were not all Jews. There were Christians in the princely household of the Roman Narcissus as well as in that of Aristobulus, the grandson of Herod. In that generation the wife of the Consul Plautus was a believer. Flavius, a Roman consul, and cousin to the Emperor Domitian, died in the faith, and a burying-ground in the catacombs bears the name of his wife, Flavia Domitilla. Prudens, son of a Roman senator, and whose wife was a British princess, stayed with St. Paul to the last.

Other such cases might be named, but they were isolated and exceptional. It was not the great of the earth who heard the missionaries of Jesus gladly; but the slave may be more truly wise than his master; the fitness of the promises of God to human need and his prophecies of good are more readily known and believed by the humble than by the proud; and the highest and truest wisdom there was then in the earth, was in the assemblies of the Christians, as any one may know by reading the

General Epistles of St. Peter or those of St. Paul. Berlin, London, or New York might well be proud of one congregation, to whom a letter, like that to the Romans or to the Hebrews, might to-day be fitly addressed.

But though, again and again, it is said that the early Christian generations were so uncritical and unlearned that scholars may set aside their decisions, yet whether the apostolic generation of Christians was a critical or a learned one, has little or nothing to do with the validity of their witness to the four Gospels. It took no learning to know what St. Matthew meant when he said he had written a Gospel; and if the credibility of those who said they heard him say so had been in question, a merchant could have settled that as well as a scribe.

But there could have been no question then about so public a fact. So, too, there could have been no question about such a public fact as that St. John wrote a Gospel. Of course that was known to the Congregation in Ephesus, and copies of it were sent at once to other cities, in whose churches it was publicly read. Whether St. Mark and St. Luke wrote Gospels that were sanctioned by St. Peter, St. Paul, or other apostles, as inspired, were not questions then for scholars to decide any more than they are now. What the Apostles said, *that* was the evidence of those things. As there could have been no better evidence, so there could have been no other; and that such was the evidence is proved by the existing use of those

Gospels that has come down from the beginning in the unbroken succession of Christians.

Some of those who argue against the true date and authorship of the Gospels imagine that these are held to be proved by the Fathers, and say the Fathers may be good witnesses to things within their own knowledge, but their witness to the origin of the Gospels is hearsay. Such it is, and, being such, of course it differs as to some few details of little or no consequence. Still *hearsay* is legal evidence in some cases, and would be legal evidence in this case. But while the weight of this testimony has sometimes been overestimated, its value has been misunderstood by skeptics. Thus, to go no further back, the witness of Irenæus is that of a learned man, about facts concerning which it was his official duty to be well informed, in which he felt great interest, and who was so near to the Apostles as to give to his words something of the same weight as if he had seen them face to face. He was about as far from them in time as we are from Washington, Hamilton, Madison, and other framers of the Constitution. Our witness to the things done by them is hearsay, like his to what the Apostles did; but our witness to the celebration of the birthday of Washington, of the Fourth of July, and to the Constitution as law in the land, is personal testimony, like that of Irenæus to the usages that prove the knowledge and memory of the Christian congregation in his day and time.

Apart from all such evidence, the proof of the date and authorship of the four Gospels is such

that the testimony of Irenæus, with the similar but earlier testimony of Justin, and with Marcion's misuse of St. Luke's Gospel in the earlier half of the second century, and all other facts recorded in books of the following century that go to confirm that proof, might all be laid out of the case, and it would be strong enough without them. The value of some facts, concerning the construction of the Gospels, handed down from the Fathers as they were handed down to them, is *inestimable;* but had there been a complete, instead of a partial, loss of what the Fathers wrote, had not a line of the Christian literature of the first five hundred Christian years escaped the ravages of the barbarians, still there would be not only sufficient but the proper evidence for the Gospels in the Gospels themselves, in the titles they bear, and in their use to-day in the Christian congregation. For it is no more possible that any generation, later than the apostolic generation, could have received them if they had not come to them from the apostolic generation, than it would be possible for the Christian congregation now to receive four Gospels in addition to those four that have come down to them in the unbroken succession of Christians from the beginning. As that knowledge and memory of the origin and authorship of the Gospels, to which the Fathers bear witness, came down to them, so in like manner it has come down to this century, and in like manner it will go down to the nineteen thousandth Christian century, if the world stand so long. In every future age, even as now, the Chris-

tian usage will make manifest the Christian knowledge and memory, as it ever has been, and still is, written on the living tablet of the heart of the ever-existing family of Christ.

The open and sufficient evidence comes with the Christian usage. It cannot be divorced from it. It inheres in it. For that usage never could have begun without good reason. This is so reasonable, so plain, so certain, that those who incline to question the Gospels should look to their mental and moral soundness; and, if they look deep into their hearts they will find that their unbelief springs out of the hope that the Gospels are not the authoritative word of the Judge of the quick and the dead.

Unbelievers hide from themselves this prevailing reason for their unbelief in many ways, only one of which can here be noticed. From the way that many of them argue, it looks as if, in considering the evidence for the Gospel, they chose to forget that evidence cannot prove any thing beyond *all* doubt. To self-evident truths and facts evidence does not attach; they can neither be proved nor doubted. Historic facts, and others that are proved by evidence, can be proved only *beyond all reasonable doubt.* Beyond that the force of evidence cannot go. Yet man is so made that either of these two kinds of truths and facts are a sufficient ground of action. No man knows that the sun will rise tomorrow, or, if it does rise, that he will be here to see it, and still the world goes on. Man is so made that he is morally bound to treat that which is beyond all reasonable doubt as if it were certain. Such

is the judgment of the common law; for, even when life hangs on its verdict, the judge charges the jury that they are to hold for certain whatever is proved beyond all reasonable doubt, and to act upon it; for, in such cases, what is known to the law as certainty has been reached—the highest certainty to which evidence can attain.

Yet in presuming to judge the Scriptures, which "come not to be judged, but to sit in judgment on us," unbelievers are often unwilling to distinguish between those two kinds of truths and facts. They assume that what God reveals will be so revealed that it cannot be doubted; and they demand that the facts of Scripture shall be proved beyond all doubt, before they will act upon them. They will not inquire whether such be the way of the Lord in nature or in life; whether it would consist with his training of the soul, or with the freedom of the human will; or whether it be, in all cases, at once possible in the nature of things.

The Lord does give to those who seek for it, in the ways of his appointing, the kind of knowledge of his truth that the unbeliever thus asks for. The Christian attains to it when, of his own consciousness, he can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" but none can have that knowledge who do not believe in the Word of God. Not having it in his heart to seek this knowledge, the unbeliever tries to quiet his conscience with thinking that if any of the facts or truths of Scripture could possibly have been other than they are, then they cannot have been *revealed;* and, stranger still, to some

of those who think they can thus withdraw certainty from the truths and facts of Scripture, certainty seems to attach to any thing they think of to put in their places!

Many of the skeptical writers of our day and generation are constitutionally given to doubt; their self-conceit mistakes their mental disease for an aptness for finding out truth; and their hallucinations bewilder those who take books for oracles. But in the question as to the date and authorship of the Gospels there is no room for the conceits and subtleties of learning, falsely so called. It may be well to clear up its perversions of the character of the times in which the Gospels were written, and of those by whom, and for whom, they were written; it may be well to free the question of the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels from side issues that have nothing to do with it, from inquiries that lead nowhere, from facts that are fancies, and from facts of no account; but, really, it ought not to be made a question at all. If it be made such, it is not a question for scholars to settle now, any more than it was such in the beginning. It is not a question where learning is required, but only the common sense that God gives, leaving all free to use it to their own good, or to abuse it to their own peril and harm. And common sense, if it do no violence to itself, cannot but dispose of the question at once, by treating as sheer impertinence the silly assertion that the memory of the ever-existing family of Christ is not the sufficient, the proper, evidence of her own records.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GOSPELS.

I HAVE thus gone rapidly over the evidence for the Gospels to prepare for this proposition: That the Gospels have come down from the days of the Disciples, and were written by those whose names they bear, is historically certain; and, therefore, literary criticism can raise no doubts as to those facts, that are of any real force. Literary criticism, though a species of historical evidence, is an uncertain one; like scholastic criticism, it is often mere personal opinion; and neither can stand against historical proof. With the genuineness and authenticity of the holy Gospels known to be certain, it is safe to study them from a literary stand-point. The beginnings of such study date far back. One of the Fathers said: "We do not invite to irrational faith in the history of Jesus in the Gospels; those who are to study it need to enter into the design of their writers, so that the purpose of each fact may be discovered." The Fathers anticipated some of the literary inquiries of which modern unbelief would take the credit; but, in times past, reverence restrained from following out such lines of thought. Now, the inroads of unbelief make it a Christian duty to prove all things, with a freedom not before

called into such fearless exercise; and only thus can some of the charges against the Gospels be answered; and thus clearer ideas of some truths that the Gospels teach may be gained.

Christ used the word Evangel. It means the good tidings, the glad news—a meaning that, unhappily, does not now appear so clearly as it did once in the English word Gospel. A wise instinct gave this name of Evangels, Good Tidings, Gospels, to the oral teachings of the Witnesses when written out by the evangelists. Their Gospels were a new thing under the sun! Even in the holy Scriptures there was nothing like them. *What are they? What is their purpose? Why were they written?* It is needless to number up the other answers to these questions, for its true answer comes, at once, with unanimity of thought and feeling, from out of the heart of the whole Christian congregation: The Gospels were written that we might be saved.

The Evangelists bear witness to the truth of this answer. St. John said of his own Gospel, it was written* that "ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and, believing, have life through His name." The thoughts and feelings, common to Matthew and John as Apostles, make it sure that St. Matthew's purpose was the same as that of his brother Evangelist. Apostles sanctioned the second and the third Gospels as inspired. After

* "These signs are written." See John xx, 30, 31. The words, as well as the works of Christ, are signs. And these two verses read as if meant for the last words of his Gospel, though St. John added a chapter afterward.

each paragraph of the one, St. Peter's confession seems to come in like a refrain, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" and the spirit of the other is that of St. Paul, "Christ and Him crucified."

The purpose of the holy Gospels is not a literary, a scientific, historic, or philosophic purpose. In one point of view the Gospels are arguments. The Evangelists present only historic facts. They trust those facts to speak for themselves. What ought to be learned from them is left to every one's conscience. No persuasive eloquence goes with the facts, no reasoning defends them, no word explains. Yet their Gospels are arguments to prove that Christ Jesus is the Son of God who taketh away the sin of the world; and the Evangelists establish this fact, that believing in Christ Jesus we may have life through his name.

One of the lesser consequences of their purpose is, that all the infidel critics of such writings must be put out of court. However skillful in the use of their art in the literatures of the kingdom of this world, they are baffled in trying to use their skill upon writings that pertain to the kingdom not of this world. What appreciation can there be of what men are doing, unless there be some little sympathy with their purpose? There can be none. And these critics have no sympathy with the purpose of the inspired Evangelists. They have no adequate idea of it, and they can have none. Salvation is to them vague, unreal; a pleasant illusion for those who have nothing in this world; a super-

stition that serves to check the passions of the populace and can adroitly be turned to aristocratic ends, yet to be despised as vulgar or dreaded as fanatical; the belief of no scholar and no gentleman, though some argue for it professionally. To such critics the idea of salvation is no more known, than the idea of culture to a savage.

Herein is the philosophy of the fact that their criticism of the Scriptures, that make wise unto salvation, is so worthless. No gold, no jewels, can be dug out of that Babylonian mound. They take their fancies for facts, they twist facts, they misunderstand, they misapply facts; and *ever to trust them is to be deceived.* Yet unwittingly, and against their will, they are of some little use. For, where the skeptic's finger points in scorn, there treasure is concealed. As these sorcerers go up and down, peering about, muttering their curses and weaving their spells in the holy land, the divining rods, in their unhallowed hands, bend downward, where, beneath the surface, are hidden veins of water and seeds of gold.

As facts in the life of the Lord are the evidence his Evangelists give of the truth their Gospels establish, it might be supposed that they would give facts on facts, till no more could be given; yet, save in the week of the Passion, there are wide spaces of silence in all the Gospels. They all pass over months without a line. In the three earlier Gospels there are such general statements as this, "Jesus went about teaching and healing." At the

close of his Gospel St. John states that so many were the things done by the Lord that all could not be written; and what the last evangelist said could not be done, none of the earlier evangelists ever thought of doing.

Manuscripts were costly, their copying was slow. The unrolling of the long scrolls was unhandy, and, written without punctuation, the reading of them was difficult. They were to be committed to memory (as was much the custom) rather than to be read as books are now read; hence the Gospels were written (as, indeed, all ancient books) with conciseness. Those things were a check in selecting facts for the oral Gospel also, which, even more than the written Gospel, the congregation was expected to learn by heart. And yet beyond these reasons lie the true reasons for the brevity and reserve of the Gospels.

There is nothing like the purpose of the inspired Evangelists in the world of thought; and in the world of letters there is nothing just like their method. Their aim is so sacred that the following illustration is hardly permissible; yet to clear up the subject is so desirable, that, if it help even a little, it may be pardoned if we suppose that four men undertook to write out the evidence that a certain man, known to two of them, and known to the others through trustworthy witnesses, was a fit person to be President of the United States; and that, as evidence of this fitness, each sets forth facts from his history, without note or comment. Each tries to give the means of forming a true idea of the

man. Their method, then, is fair—the most fair that can be thought of. It shows their spirit is fearless as well as fair: for it leaves the man to be judged, not by what they *think* about him, but by what he, himself, has said and done. Their four portraits are, unmistakably, portraits of the same person, but they are drawn with such freedom that they are not just alike; and the likeness comes out better from them all than from one alone. Each makes a selection of facts somewhat different from the others. Where the same facts are given each sets them in a somewhat different light, and each thinks he gives facts enough. They naturally follow, more or less, the order of time, thus giving some clew to that order; but this is not done in all cases, nor would all their narratives, if combined, make a biography. There would be breaks in the chronology; facts of a common kind would be brought together, whether they happened together or not; and it might be as impossible to make out, from such records, the exact time and place of each and every anecdote and event as it would be needless for the end their writers had in view.

This illustration of the method of the holy Evangelists, though inadequate, yet shows the worthlessness of the adverse criticism of the Gospel, that proceeds upon the error (as much of it does) that the Gospels were biographies. A Gospel and a biography have some things in common, so have a Gospel and a history; and at times it may be convenient to call them such, but it misleads, it confuses and confounds. A Gospel, in its purpose and in its

method, is as different from a biography as the life of the Lord is unlike the lives of men. The writer of a biography thinks he knows a man well—better, perhaps, than he knew himself—and, to make that man as well known to others, he tries to tell all that he knows. Such is the feeling, the purpose, with which he goes about his work; but such was not the feeling or the purpose of the holy Evangelists. Matthew and John testified to what they had seen and heard. They would have given up their lives to make the Lord known to others as he was known to them, but they knew there was much they did not and could not know of him. He, himself, had said, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." They are silent about very much that they did know of the life of the Lord, and the mercy of God is in their silence. He suffered not the Witnesses to his Son to be over-anxious to accumulate evidence that his is the only name given under heaven, among men, whereby they can be saved, for more evidence would not avail for the salvation of those who reject the evidence they give. By his will the evangelists stopped short of telling all they might have told—they were content to make the truth certain.

As long as the limitation of the purpose of the Evangelists is not well understood, the construction of the Gospels seems to give some countenance to the theory that they are made up of fragmentary facts, interspersed with myths and legends. Such a theory accounts for any breaks, any chronological disorder, any difference there may seem to be in the

Gospels, with a plausibility that will be delusive and dangerous until a satisfactory explanation is given of how the Gospels came to be as they are.

Before attempting to give such an explanation, it may be well to glance at the theory just spoken of. Between the mythical and the legendary the difference is a shadowy one; but as the period of the myth is *prehistoric*, there is nothing that can strictly be called mythical in the Gospels. Every thing in them to which that term has been given might be covered by the word legendary; but the word mythical, by a special adaptation, was applied to the gospel narratives, because a mythical element was said to have entered into them in consequence of the Hebrew belief that the Prophets foretold a Coming Man; and this is said to have kindled the imagination, to see its fulfillment in Jesus. But a predictive element was thus conceded to Hebrew Scripture, which after a time it became so convenient to deny, that the mythical theory went out of favor with those who brought it in. For this, and for better reasons, it has become a thing of the past.

In the nature of the legend there is something of the unreal, the fantastic, the childish: there is nothing of this kind in the Gospels. Myth and legend would have told marvelous tales of the childhood of Jesus, such as are told in the apocryphal Gospels. Neither myth nor legend would have shunned the thirty shaded years of the life of Jesus and chosen the broad daylight of his ministry; and neither myth nor legend would have kept away, as did the three earlier Gospels, from the Holy City, the Temple-

courts, and the hill that was religious even before Abraham went there to offer up his son.

The fragmentary theory has taken the places of the mythical and the legendary theories. For the "seamless coat woven of one piece" this theory offers garments tattered and torn; and it should be known as the *ragged* theory. One example will suffice to show something of its character. When (A. D. 1835) the government of Prussia consulted with Neander concerning the prohibition of Strauss' "Life of Jesus," his effectual counsel against it was in accord with Jefferson's saying, "that error may be safely left free, if truth be free to combat with it." Neander, called upon by the evangelical in Germany, made a reply to Strauss, the first of many, and second to none in power. Some of the sentences in his "Life of Christ" are seed-grains, out of which books have grown that have rightly made their authors famous. Neander was devout, yet he took up with the notion that the Gospels are "fragments;" and he showed, at once, to what errors this pitiful conception of their character leads. He pronounced St. Matthew's statement that Pharisees and Sadducees came to hear John the Baptist "*unhistorical*," on the ground that "it is improbable that men of the peculiar religious opinions of the Sadducees should have been attracted by the preacher of repentance." This must seem strange to the English-speaking race, who know how men of every creed and calling—Freethinkers, Quakers, and Churchmen, ladies of quality, sinners and saints, swarthy coal-blackened miners, and men of fashion,

Franklin the philosopher, and Foote the actor—went out to hear the field-preaching of the eloquent Whitefield. In this fair specimen of the criticism that questions the accuracy of the Evangelists, Neander treats their witness as Strauss constantly did. Neander gave it much the most credence; but, if facts in the Gospels may thus be set aside, who shall draw the line, and where can the line be drawn?

Neander was a man of multifarious reading; his "Church History" shows a marvelous power of tracing the evolvement of thought from thought; but in practical knowledge he had but the quickness and simplicity of a child. The well-built, rectangular city of Berlin seemed to him, like the Gospels, "a collection of fragments;" and for twenty years he could never find his way, without guidance, from his house to his lecture-room in the University. His book is far better than could have been hoped for with the error that vitiates it; but in the half-century since Neander took a course which for the moment seemed an effectual one, there has been a growing disposition, among the orthodox, to treat the Gospels as he did—as seen in Tholuck in Germany, in Alford in England, in Pressensé in France; and there has been a growing disposition in the world to give up the historic credibility of the Holy Gospels.

The fragmentary theory throws a tempting bridge over the deep chasm that separates the high and firm ground of the Gospels from the quagmire and marsh of tradition; and thus it may be that even so judicious a man as Ellicott was led on to say

that, "perhaps, at the baptism was seen the kindled fire over the Jordan of which an old writer has made mention!" The fragmentary theory opens the way again for the mythical and legendary theories. It disguises them in itself; for fragments of sacred traditions are, naturally, more or less mythical and legendary; and so those theories return, with a plausibility they had not when presented, as if they, of themselves, cleared up the structure of the Gospels. Those who fully receive the fragmentary theory and still think to keep the faith as it is in Jesus, do not see how they are giving away the battle, as to the mythical and legendary, after it has been won; and I think that, without seeming to know it, those semi-orthodox have marched over into the enemy's camp, to find themselves prisoners, with all their baggage and material of war.

Yet the ragged theory, when steadily looked at, goes out of sight. One fact is enough to drive it off. If the three earlier Gospels were gathered-up fragments, there would have been some gathered-up fragments from the ministry in Judea. Our Lord alluded to that ministry, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often!"—this outburst of feeling, twice repeated, has a place in the first and in the third Gospels, yet neither in them, nor in the second Gospel, is there any word or miracle from that ministry. This kills the ragged theory. For, were the first of those Gospels made up of fragments, picked up after the days of the Witnesses, it would be very strange that some of them should not have been picked up in Judea as well as in Galilee. It is incredible that

what is so unlikely should have happened, by chance, for the second time, and it is impossible that it could have so happened for the third time. There must have been a purpose in the beginning and continuing of this silence of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke. It was the silence of design, and I think we shall be able to find its reason; but whether we can or not, on the fragmentary theory there is no reason for it at all. Whatever be the truth as to the construction of the Gospels, the ragged theory, like the mythical and the legendary, cannot be true.

Yet without hesitation, and without timidity, it is to be frankly said that, at some few points, the Gospels have rather a fragmentary look. Almost all of this disappears as soon as a clear view is gained of the limitations of their purpose; yet there is something to be done before all the special and general facts that, here and there, give them a little of this aspect, can be cleared up. Of such special facts we give these two examples. St. Matthew is silent concerning his noble townsman, whose son was healed, and who, with all his house, believed; so is St. Mark, though St. Peter also lived in Capernaum; and so is St. Luke. The field of their Gospels was Galilee, yet this Galilean miracle comes out only in the last Gospel, whose field was Judea. Again, St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke all tell of Jairus' daughter, while only St. Luke tells of the son of the widow of Nain.

Besides such minor perplexities there are those of greater breadth; and though the unity of each

Gospel and the unity of the Gospels as a whole readily disprove the sweeping charge that the Gospels are fragments, yet no single principle will guide through all the intricacies of their construction. Even to approximate to the solution of that problem several lines of thought must be combined, and different kinds of facts and truths must be considered.

GOSPELS.

Gospels is a
we can-
that
ments,
to a
ched

were not
s the
be?
of
and St.
of St. An-
of the
supply,
but
disciples
reason

And the like of this has sometimes happened as to time-honored institutions and ancient laws.

The lost explanation will close up a gap in the moldered wall of the city of Zion, through which deluding phantoms glide. Infidels can say, with some show of reason, that the inability to prove that the witness of all the Apostles is in the four Gospels is equivalent to a confession that it is not there; and it is trying to Christians not to be able to give an intelligent answer to the cry of their own hearts, Where is the witness of the other ten Apostles? Where is that of the apostle Paul? Are they lost forever?

To these inquiries the answer will, in part, be found in what may be learned of the affinities of the oral Gospels with the written Gospel. Let us then recall what has already been said of the oral Gospels or Gospel, and try to gain a full, clear, and true idea of how they came to be, and of what it was composed. Each apostle preached and taught in his own way, which, of course, differed from that of the others, and it differed in different circumstances; yet their oral Gospels all had the same purpose, and, from time to time, they heard each other as they preached and taught. The great truths in their oral Gospels were the same: the divine nature of Christ, his sacrificial death, and his taking again the life he laid down; and it can be proved that, in their oral Gospels, the facts selected from the life of Christ were much the same facts.

Almost all our direct knowledge of what the

Apostles did while in Jerusalem comes from the Acts; and in that book the signs of their oral teaching are not as marked as might be looked for. But it is not known that St. Luke was ever in that city in the earlier part of that time; of some of the things then and there done, his informant may have been Saul—thus, the report of Gamaliel's speech probably came from him, for Saul was a member of the Sanhedrim; yet of much that the Apostles were doing the unconverted Saul may have known nothing. But it is more pertinent to the matter that every-where among the Christians the oral teaching of the Gospel had become a well-known usage, for common things are apt to be overlooked.

And on carefully studying St. Luke's words allusions to oral teaching are seen which are more decisive in the Greek than in our English translation. The converts at the great Pentecost "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine"—*τῃ διδαχῃ ταν ἀποστολων*: continued steadfastly attentive to the teaching of the Apostles, is closer to the meaning. Again, "With great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection," that is, the great power of the Spirit went with their witness. As before shown, their witness to the resurrection was mainly their testimony to the life of their Lord, and the meaning of the word (*το μαρτυριον* *) witness is more specific than it is in the translation, for the Greek word points to a fixed, definite form of testimony.

* Here the word is neuter. When its sense is general it is commonly, in the Greek, feminine, and such the New Testament usage.

And, in passing, it may be worth while to note that the Greek word translated preaching meant heralding; now a herald's message is fixed for him, both in form and words, and from it he is not to vary in the least.

In Jerusalem the teaching emanating from the twelve disciples must have taken on a somewhat fixed and common form. Not rigidly such; it was not word for word, just the same every-where, or every time; yet it was such that, on the whole, it may be properly spoken of as one and the same; and this is what I mean by the Oral Gospel, or, more exactly, the Oral Teaching of the Apostles.

Their oral teaching was a recital of the life of Christ Jesus, of his crucifixion, and his resurrection; and that this was most faithfully taught and diligently learned by the congregations every-where is proved by the Epistles. To our knowledge of the words of our Lord, the Epistles add only the line, "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" and to our knowledge of his miracles, they add not one. Though written to so many congregations, so wide apart, and though one of them was from James, the Lord's brother, there is not in them all one single reference to any of the numberless events in the ministry of Christ, such as the raising of the widow's son, the stilling of the storm, or the cure of the demoniacs. Hence it is certain that the *memoriter* oral teaching had done its perfect work in those congregations to which the Epistles were written, some of which were addressed to all the Churches: for the only reason there can be for this surprising

silence is that in the congregation there was a perfect knowledge of the life of the Lord, as now in sermons there often is a like silence, because the preacher is sure that his hearers know what their Lord said and did. This luminous fact in the Epistles lights up the apostolic world; it shows that in knowledge of the facts of the life of the Lord the converts were perfect, wanting nothing. Never, since those days, has the life of the Lord been so fully written on the hearts of his people, and when it shall again be so written the Gospel will again conquer the world.

The oral teaching could not have been given to the converts all at once. It was taught in sections, and probably those containing the Crucifixion and the Resurrection were given out first. This was so in the oral teaching of St. Paul. To the Corinthians—a congregation with whom he lived two years or more—he writes, "I delivered unto you, *first of all*, how that Christ died for our sins, and that he was buried and rose again the third day:"—but his going on to recite to them some of the facts in the first section of his oral Gospel does not at all contradict the uniform assumption in the Epistles of the perfect knowledge in the congregation of the life of the Lord, for the Apostle simply gives weight to his argument by recalling to them facts they knew, such as that the Lord was seen by Peter, by James, and by himself.

Of such sections the converts learned by heart what they could—some less, some more. Some tried to write down this oral teaching, and to put

its sections fitly together. This is what St. Luke means when he says that many undertook to set forth in order (that is, in its time-order) what was delivered by the eye-witnesses of the Word.

It was given to Gieseler earlier than to any one else with equal clearness, to see what the coincidences in the first three Gospels indicate of the true relations of the oral to the written Gospel. That was sixty years ago, (A. D. 1818;) and so much of the controversy as to the Gospels has since turned upon the oral Gospel, that it is strange there has been so little appreciation of the difficulties there were in framing the oral Gospel; but, then, little thought has ever been given to the difficulties in framing the written Gospel. To Christians the Gospels seem to have come up like flowers or trees from some life-principle within, so perfect in its working that they have been content to call it God's work. To this truth the soul, after all its searching into the human element in the Gospels, returns in thankfulness, and there rests in peace. But that it may rest there with a peace never more to be troubled, it needs to know all that can be known of the human element in the Gospels. True insight into the human nature of Christ, the Living Word, conduces much to faith in His divine nature, and the like is true of his Written Word.

On thinking of the framing of the Oral and also of the Written Gospel, it may seem to have been an easier thing than it was. My first thought was that oral teaching of the three thousand was some such recital of the sayings and doings of the Lord as a

missionary makes to the heathen; but the resemblance is a superficial and misleading resemblance. The missionary merely translates what the disciples made ready for him; but their work in Jerusalem was the finest and most difficult piece of work that men ever did. Pressensé ridicules the idea of "an official editing" of the oral Gospel by an apostolic college, holding sessions in the Holy City; and, truly, we may as well think the disciples had a staff of short-hand writers and proof-readers, as to suppose that they went about framing the oral Gospel with all the ceremonial pomp of a General Council in later imperial ages. But, still, it may as well be denied that there was any Jerusalem, any Witnesses, any Gospel, oral or written, as that the oral Gospel, the condition precedent of the written Gospel, was the difficult achievement of all the disciples.

It may be thought a simple and easy thing for them to tell what they knew; but was it so easy to tell it as they told it? Is it so simple a thing to form a true idea of any man? Is not the power of drawing a speaking likeness of man or woman, the rarest gift of literary genius? Was it so simple and easy to form, and to convey to others, a true idea of such a manner of man as the Lord from heaven? a true idea of Him who was not only of a new race, but the life of that new creation? a true idea of the Son of man and Son of God, in whom two natures were united that were wider apart than the ends of the universe?

In framing the oral Gospel the disciples had nothing in their own literature to guide them; but,

had they known all the literatures before or since, it would not have helped them. They wrought out what would have been the greatest of all wonders in the world of letters, had it not been wrought in a different world and by the help of another Energy: but in saying this, thought runs forward and embraces in one idea the written with the oral Gospel. For, through their oral Gospel, all the disciples contributed to the perfection of that written Gospel in whose likeness of Him whom men could not fully comprehend nor rightly describe, the promise of the Lord was fulfilled—"In you the Holy Ghost shall glorify me."

Portrait-painters fail of a likeness when they try to put too much on their canvas; and the truth and effectiveness of the disciples' portraiture of their Lord as really depended on their silence as on their speech. The difficulty of leaving out was never so difficult, for never was every thing so worthy of being put in; but here the oral Gospel set the pattern that the evangelists copied. The Apostles felt there was no need to strengthen the evidence they gave—no need to bring all the truth into the field. This is plain from their choosing so few out of a great multitude of facts. The same feeling is manifest in the writings of the Evangelists, and they obeyed the law the Apostles laid down. That feeling is one of the secrets of the influence of their Gospels, though it gives the fragmentary appearance they have in the eyes of critics who cannot see that the drawing of a portrait is not the compiling of a biography or the writing of a history.

That the Lord's ordaining will was in the course that was taken by the Apostles in the framing of the oral Gospel and which was copied by the Evangelists in the written Gospel, is seen in his promise—"The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." This promise was more specific than it is in our version. The word rendered *bring to remembrance* (ὑπομνήσει) means *to suggest;* and hence the meaning of the promise is, that the Holy Spirit would suggest to them so much of what he had said as would give them a true idea of the whole of it—somewhat as when a master-builder, having talked at length with his head-workmen about his plans and wishes, then clears up the whole by a few emphatic words that tell them just what to do, and fix in their minds the sum and substance of it all.

In their silence, as in their speech, the Disciples and the Evangelists were guided by divine wisdom; but they had to decide some things that were, perhaps, more within the scope of their own judgment. Such may have been the question in what language the Gospel should be written. This question was suggested, and was finally determined, by the fact that the Greek language was then used in Palestine.

There was also in use what may be readily described as the later Hebrew, (though pedantry, darkening what it seems to explain, calls what in Scripture and by the Fathers was known as the Hebrew tongue, the Aramæan, or the Syro-Chaldaic.) In that Hebrew tongue our Lord cried from the cross,

"Eloi! Eloi! lama sabachthani?" That was the mother tongue of the Jews of Palestine.

But, in consequence of a series of events that began with Alexander's conquest of Asia, a dialect of the Greek was also known to the Jews of Palestine. How well it was known two facts may here sufficiently indicate. Acra, the name of one of the hills of Jerusalem, was Greek, and so was the Sanhedrim, the name of the parliament of the Jews. Outside of the small country of Palestine, the Hebrew tongue was not in common use among the Jews. Even Philo knew nothing of it. Still it was a strong measure to set aside our Lord's native tongue for a heathen language; and yet on the final determination of the disciples to do this largely depended the rapidity with which the life of the Lord was made known throughout the world; for the Greek language was well-nigh universal throughout the Roman empire, and was known even beyond its eastern boundary. Near the Tigris, Seleucia, in those days, was a free Greek city, with a Senate of three hundred members, and with six hundred thousand inhabitants.

Some hundred and fifty years before the Christian era, at Alexandria in Egypt, the translation was made of the Scriptures into Greek which is known as that of the LXX, or as the Septuagint. This was in use among the Jews of Palestine, as well as with those in Egypt, in Africa, in Syria, and elsewhere. The LXX did something toward fitting the Greek to utter those spiritual ideas that were the heritage of the true human race, and were in the

family of Noah, but which the Greeks, like other heathens, had forgotten; and, also, to express spiritual ideas that had not been revealed to the Greeks, because of their apostasy. Even the facile and copious Greek language could not have embodied the truths the Witnesses declared, without the help of the Septuagint. Its help was great, and yet there were some of their Master's words for which they had to frame Greek equivalents, such, perhaps, as the word in our Lord's prayer translated "daily bread."

It was nice and difficult work to transfer the whole volume of the Lord's discourses, parables, and sayings, where with divine felicity the word fitted the thought, from the Hebrew tongue into the Greek, with their excellence unimpaired; yet the disciples did this so well that no one dreams it could have been better done. We cannot help feeling so without being able to verify it; and, as every good thing loses in translation, here might seem to have been a literary miracle, were it not that from their infancy the disciples had been so familiar with the Hebrew tongue, and with the Greek, that they spoke in both and thought in both; and that what they did was rather a transferring from one language to the other than a translating.

Language-learning is an important element in a liberal education; and the readiness with which the Disciples thought in two languages—and languages as unlike as the oak and the palm—shows they had more of real intellectual training from their infancy than the pedants of their time conceded to them.

And, in my judgment, there were never any persons but Palestinian Jews who could have so transferred the Gospel from the Hebrew tongue into the Greek. But if it be said that St. Luke was a Greek of Antioch in Syria, it is to be remembered that documents of Hebraic origin are incorporated into his Gospel as they came to him in Greek; and that the basis of his Gospel was laid by St. Paul, and he spoke and thought both in Hebrew and in Greek; for in the "uproar" in Jerusalem "when the Jews heard him speak in the Hebrew tongue they kept the more silence." Few of the foreign-born Jews could have done *that;* but, providentially, Saul had learned so to talk in his infancy, in his father's family in Tarsus; for, doubtless, our Lord spoke from heaven "*in the Hebrew tongue*" to Saul, on his way to Damascus, because with Saul, as with Himself, it was his mother's tongue.

As St. Matthew composed his Gospel in Hebrew, the decision of the disciples, as to which language they should use, was not made at once. But the need of the Hellenists in the city, and the common use of Greek, must shortly have led to oral teaching in Greek and to a transferring backward and forward of the Gospel from one language to the other; and as thus the Witnesses sometimes used one language and sometimes the other, the Greek expression of the Hebrew grew constantly more and more perfect; and at last the reason for the sole use of the Greek language became so manifest, as the thoughts of the Apostles went forth more and more into the field of the world, that St. Mat-

thew transferred his Gospel, which he had writteu in the Hebrew tongue, into Greek.

The disciples had also to decide whether to quote the old Hebrew Scripture or the better known translation:—and here I offer my first direct evidence of such an affinity between the oral Gospel and the written Gospel, that from the written Gospels we may be sure of some facts in the construction of the oral Gospel; and also that, substantially, the oral Gospel of the Twelve is contained in the three earlier Gospels. The quotations from the Old Testament, that are common to St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, are usually taken from the Septuagint, though some few of them agree in a peculiar rendering of the Hebrew. Where St. Matthew himself quotes the Old Testament—that is, where he cites texts that are cited by no other evangelist—he consults the Hebrew; hence, my conclusion is, that the disciples fixed upon and even determined the exact form of those proof-texts that are common to those three Gospels.

The second Gospel is St. Peter's oral Gospel, written out by St. Mark, (as proved hereafter;) and here I would only note that the discourses, and references to prophecy, that must have been a part of St. Peter's Gospel, were omitted by St. Mark because they were in St. Matthew's Gospel; and I call attention to this difference that my readers may contrast it with the agreement of those Gospels as to miracles. In the second, all the miracles, save two, are the same as in the first; and the entire cycle of miracles common to the two earlier Gos-

pels also reappears in that of St. Luke, who, besides those, records only six others out of the multitudes left unrecorded. From these facts we must conclude that the miracles common to those Gospels were fixed upon by the disciples for the oral Gospel. This is a satisfactory reason for their threefold repetition; and I would ask my readers whether they can think of any other satisfactory reason, or, rather, if they can think of any other reason for it at all?

Our third evidence of the affinity of those Gospels with the oral Gospel is that the field of each is Galilee. St. Matthew thus limited his Gospel for a special reason hereafter given; but when St. Mark's Gospel, and St. Luke's also, are limited to the ministry in Galilee, then it becomes certain that the field of the oral Gospel was limited in the same way. My last special evidence is the fact that the order of events is the same in each of those Gospels: the Baptism, the Temptation, the Galilean ministry, dating from the imprisonment of John, and the Week of the Passion. And here I would have my readers connect with this common order their common silence as to the ministry in Judea; for it seems to me that, in view of these facts, there can be no doubt as to the order of events and the field of the oral Gospel.

As we marshal all these facts, we find that the relation of these three Gospels to the oral Gospel is incontrovertible. Holding in reserve my ideas as to how each of the three earlier evangelists set about his work, and as to the aim of each as distinct

from the purpose common to them all, I would here say, that they knew the oral Gospel by heart; it was their storehouse of material, their authority, their guide. They took it for their pattern, they accepted its limitation, they borrowed from it words and phrases, they wrote it out in substance; and so far from the oral Gospels of the twelve Witnesses being lost, it is reproduced in the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, in a more complete form than in any one of those twelve forms in which it was taught.

The attempt to reconstruct the oral Gospel meets with difficulties, in the flexibility of that Gospel, and in the freedom with which those three Gospels were written, that cannot be overcome. All the many such attempts have so utterly failed that its reconstruction may be held to be impossible. Still, the field of the oral Gospel, its leading features, its speech, and its silence, its miracles, its citations of prophecy, and its discourses, can be known from those Gospels. There much of its narrative is given in much the same way and sometimes in much the same words. The like is still more true of the discourses and sayings of the Lord, where their verbal coincidences *are more frequent* than in their narrative; and they often all retain some expressive phrase, such as, "shall not taste of death."

The oral Gospel was the joint construction of the chosen Witnesses; still it was not a stereotyped Gospel. There were thirteen forms of it, as there are three forms of the record of Matthew's call, three of the healing of the man sick with palsy, three of

the word on Mount Olivet. Amid those forms, and amid the changes each apostle made in suiting his teaching to the time and place, sometimes giving it more fully, sometimes more briefly, the minds of those Evangelists moved with freedom; and, while they kept to the same field, the same order, and to much the same facts, they gave to each of their Gospels a character of its own. Authoritative as the oral Gospel was to them, obedient as they were to its example, yet each Evangelist wrote in his own way, as it seemed to him good.

In the same spirit out of which grew the old legend of the translation of the Bible by the Seventy, one might imagine that had the disciples been shut up separately in a cell, they would all have written line for line and word for word, alike. But the Lord's promise to them was not fulfilled mechanically, nor was it meant to be; for his words point to human, as well as to divine testimony: "The Spirit which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me, and ye also shall bear witness because ye have been with Me from the beginning." Their witness to the life of the Lord is after the manner of human testimony; one remembers this, another that, and the same things are recalled more fully or more vividly by one than by another. Under the guidance of the Spirit, the Apostles selected from among the words and deeds of their Lord what were to go into their oral Gospel; and so the three earlier Evangelists, under the same guidance, selected from the oral Gospels what should go into their written Gospel. In one form of the oral Gospel

some things were more clear, some more pictorial, some more complete than in another; and the Evangelists selected from and combined these, so as to give to their own Gospels the utmost perfection. They were under the common influence of the oral Gospel; and, as was natural with unpracticed writers, they caught up phrases that were of frequent recurrence, they repeated sentences and parts of sentences, but they did not draw upon it mechanically.* Of course, the Apostle Matthew did not give the version of any of his brethren; he gave his own; St. Mark gave St. Peter's, St. Luke gave St. Paul's; and yet what has been said of the evangelists would apply to those three apostles. The oral Gospel was incorporate in the souls of them all, and it spoke through them, while it yet left them free to speak.

What Justin Martyr says about the Gospels will be found, when fairly and fully considered, exactly to agree with what has here been written. Writing for Jews and for heathen, he coined a name for the

* While this volume was going through the press, I have looked over the long, elaborate treatise on the Gospels, in the edition of the "Encyclopædia Brittanica," now publishing. By a minute dissection of the narratives of the holy Evangelists it tries to prove that the Gospels are confused traditions; but its hundreds of Greek citations only show that the Evangelists wrote naturally. They are merely a pedantic and puerile enumeration of variations that were things of course. The chief significance of this last word of unbelief is in its showing that infidelity is now introduced into scientific books, as it was by the Encyclopædists before the French Revolution. Painstaking, as is usual with this sort of writing, this critique, as well as the many before that are like it, confirms my opinion, that ever to trust to this class of writers *is to be deceived.*

Gospels that would describe them to those who knew something of Greek literature. He borrowed Xenophon's well-known title of his reminiscences of the life and sayings of his master, Socrates, and called them the Memorabilia (the Memoirs) of the Apostles. He uses this name a dozen times; but he marks what their name is among Christians—they are "called Gospels." "They were written," he says, "by apostles and by those who accompanied or followed with apostles;" that is, some by Apostles and some by companions of Apostles. He states that on every Sunday they were read with the writings of the prophets. To Justin, then, our four Gospels were the witness of the Apostles; and his opinion loses nothing because not given in any formal statement, but (though coming in repeatedly) always in a casual, off-hand way. Hence we are sure that Christians then thought and spoke of the four Gospels as the witness of all the Apostles. And it were well to make this way of thinking and speaking of the Gospels (which from Justin's time to this has never been out of use in the Congregation) again as common as it was in his day and generation.

To the question—As there are but four Gospels, and as only two were written by Apostles, where is the witness of the ten, and where is that of St. Paul? the answer, then, is this: St. Mark's Gospel is that of St. Peter, written down from his own lips. St. Luke's is that of the thirteenth apostle. And, from the circumstances in which the three earlier Gospels were written, from their selections, from their omis-

sions, from the order in which they relate the life of the Lord, from their common choice of Galilee as their field, and their common avoidance of Judea, from some of their words and phrases, and, in short, from all the evidences that have been given of a connection between the unwritten Gospel of the Twelve and those written Gospels, it is certain that while the Gospels, of St. Matthew especially, and, in some degree, those of St. Mark and St. Luke, are their own, there is a definite and true sense in which those Gospels are the joint-witness of the holy Apostles. St. John wrote the last Gospel in their name. And, God being pleased to make the Gospel perfect, in it the Blessed Mother bore her own witness to her Son and Lord.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WRITING OUT OF THE GOSPEL.

IT is hard to keep the two questions as to the origin and construction of the Gospels entirely distinct; the line here drawn between them is a line of convenience rather than of strict division; and my first proposition as to their construction belongs to both.

That St. Matthew and St. John, and that only those two of the twelve Witnesses, wrote out the Gospel, is sufficient evidence that they were selected by their brethren for that office. There is no record of such a choice; but there are some considerations that may partially explain the lack of such evidence. The two earlier Evangelists close their Gospels with the Resurrection. St. Luke continues the sacred history; he describes the day of Pentecost and some events that took place afterward in Jerusalem; but, as already noted, St. Paul was not then numbered among the disciples. Then came the long silence before described. And on the mind and memory of the early Christian generations the selection of Matthew and John as Evangelists may have made less impression, because the questions about the construction of the Gospels that unbelief would raise in future ages could

not be foreknown; because, in virtue of their office, the Apostles Matthew and John were empowered to write out the Gospel; because, like all Christians, they thought more of the divine in the Gospels than of the human; and because they held the four Gospels to be the joint testimony of all the chosen Witnesses.

Whether these things do or do not account for it, let it be frankly acknowledged that there is no record of the Disciples having given such counsel to Matthew and John; and yet there is a line of thought that makes this as certain to my mind as if it were well known in history. There are many unrecorded things concerning the Disciples that are as certain as if they were facts of record, merely because the Disciples were men. That they were born, or that they slept at night and waked with the morning, though not facts of record, are so certain that no record could make them more so; and their counseling with one another about the writing out of the Gospel is equally certain, though there be no record of it. For the absence of any record of this we may, or we may not, be able to account; but it should be the fixed rule of our thinking never to doubt what we do know because of what we do not know. In all truth there is the unknown as well as the known. In the Hebrew Scripture darkness is one of the symbols of God. His holiest servants knew in part and prophesied but in part. And as the element light went forth in the beginning out of the darkness, so the truth in nature, in history, in Scripture, ever goes forth out of darkness.

I do not think that the Disciples took action upon the writing out of the Gospel with any great formality, great as were its consequences. I come to this conclusion not merely because ecclesiastical ceremonials came in afterward; not merely because the idea that the Apostles held what might be called a Council, by way of needlessly clothing their action with dignity, carries a later term back to those primitive days; but simply because there could have been no debate concerning the writing out of the Gospel. The Disciples were earnest men, not men of words or forms, and could not have discussed with formality and at length what was a thing of course. That the Gospel should be written out was no more the thought of one than of another; for one to name it was for them all to say it must be done.

When the Disciples came to pass upon the number of the written Gospels, doubtless they at once dismissed the extravagance of twelve. They may have paused at the sacred number seven, and again at the perfect number four; but here conjecture is needless, for we know they fixed upon two, for only two of them wrote out the Gospel. This number seems too small—perhaps because of our four Gospels—but the disciples were not book-making men. They could all teach, for that was telling out of their own hearts about Him of whom they were always thinking. It was telling of what he said and what he did, how he laid down his life, how he took it again; but they had never tried to write a book. And yet, while teaching, each was uncon-

sciously helping on the work that he felt he could not do. For the molten form of the written Gospel was the oral Gospel—the written Gospel is the crystallization of the oral Gospels.

The Disciples had next to choose their two writers, and it is natural to think that they all (save the two most concerned) at once fixed upon their Chief, and upon the Disciple whom Jesus loved, and to whom he had intrusted the care of his Mother. Besides this suggestive and persuasive reason there was still another why they selected John. There were two fields of our Lord's ministry—a fact that may have had something to do with determining the number of the Gospels. John had a house in Jerusalem. He was more familiar with the city than those other "men of Galilee." In all the visits of Jesus to Jerusalem, save his last, there are signs of caution; and it is likely that on some of them he took John only with him. On his first visit there could have been with him only four of the Disciples besides John. The whole of the Judean ministry was not, then, personally known to all the Twelve; possibly the whole of it was known to John, and to him only; indeed, this is a fair conclusion, because the Judean ministry forms no part of their oral Gospel, while it forms almost the whole of the Gospel of St. John.

Quick, impetuous natures often distrust themselves; and some such feeling may have hindered St. Peter from yielding to the will of his brethren; and he may have discovered a great fitness in Matthew for the work to be done; for, doubtless, with

the assent of all, the Chief Apostle named Matthew as, next to John, the one best fitted to write out the Gospel.

Matthew was not of the inner circle of three into which, on the Mount of Olives, came Andrew, who, with John, was the first to seek Jesus, and who brought to Him his brother Simon. Matthew's name comes into the second group of the disciples. St. Luke puts it third in that class; he himself puts it fourth and last. After his discipleship Levi, the son of Alpheus, was known by the name of Matthew—"the gift of God." The name may have been given by the Lord. I cannot think he took it himself when I look at his list of the disciples, for, in that roll of honor, he styles himself "Matthew the publican." Levi was one of the tax-gatherers of Herod of Galilee. As he was sitting in Oriental fashion at the receipt of customs — a strange place for such a call—he heard Jesus saying, "Follow me." Some traits of Levi's character, that I seem to see in the portrait he unconsciously drew of himself in his Gospel, then come out. Levi, the Silent, answered in deeds, not in words. With a merchant-like quickness of decision, he rose, left all, and followed Jesus.

After he became a disciple he made a feast for the Master. Nothing else that he did is mentioned in the Gospels; and there he says not a word. It has been often repeated that his office in the customs fitted him for the office of an Evangelist, but I fail to see the relation between collecting taxes and writing a Gospel. By choosing him to write for

them his brethren show that, in spite of his silence, they knew he was fitted for that work; and his Gospel vindicates their choice. The men who make history are not usually the men who write it; yet some men of action have written better than rhetoricians; and, though not a man of letters and not a man of words, yet, if ever any one was capable of writing well, that one was Levi, the son of Alpheus, known to us as Matthew—"the gift of God."

Let me clear up what has been said of the action of the twelve Apostles in having the Gospel properly written out in their name, by supposing that had their last survivor but one been interrogated concerning their course, the aged man might thus have replied:

"I remember. I was not to do it. Writing books was not my gift, nor was it Brother Peter's. We were men of action. I could tell the story, for I knew it by heart, and I shall tell it till I die; but I could not write it. We all felt timid about writing a book; but it had to be done. There was no doubt of *that*. We all thought of Peter and John; some thought of Andrew, some of others. The matter was not much talked about. Somehow it came to be understood among us that Matthew and John were to do it. Matthew did his work a long while ago. The story got round among the brethren that John would never die. They did not get that quite right, like some other things; but, from something the Master did say, we knew that John would tarry long. He has outlived all but me. We live till our work is done."

CHAPTER VII.

LIMITATIONS OF THE GOSPELS.

IN trying to look into the construction of the Gospels, one of the first things to be done is to compare those of the two Apostles. On laying them side by side it is seen at once that St. Matthew and St. John made a division of the field of our Lord's ministry—St. Matthew choosing Galilee, and St. John, Judea. St. Matthew's course proves this; for though St. John might have taken the Judean field because the Evangelists before him had not entered it, yet why did not St. Matthew occupy that field, or some part of it? The course of St. John also is evidence of this division; for much that the Lord did in Galilee was left unrecorded, and yet thrice only does St. John garner up any of the sheaves that his colleague had left in that harvest field. St. Matthew and St. John follow each his own path till Calvary comes in sight; then their paths come together, for the Gospel is the story of the Cross. The last week in the life of their Lord was common to them both; and yet, as will be seen hereafter, even then, as to the recital of some things, there was an understanding between them.

In St. Matthew's avoidance of the Ministry in

Judea there is the soberness of history, not the flightiness of legendary lore; and, though the like course of St. Mark and St. Luke complicates matters, yet even if that could not be explained, (as it can be,) still St. Matthew could not have left such a blank had he not been well assured that it would be filled up. An agreement between him and some one else is the only rationally conceivable human reason for his course, still leaving for it a higher reason in the determinate wisdom of God. And the strength of this argument is re-enforced to demonstration when there is seen in St. John's Gospel that concert of action which is anticipated in St. Matthew's Gospel.

I find this confirmed, rather than otherwise, by the tradition which, in the third century, Eusebius recites. He says that the elders of the congregation at Ephesus brought to the last Apostle, then very old, the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, and that he gave them his sanction. Eusebius further states that St. John said there were yet some things to be written, and the elders besought him to write them. All this may be true; for, though the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke must long before have received the sanction of some of the apostles, it was natural that this should be asked for again for the last time; and, though the Gospel of the Apostle needed no sanction, that this should be brought with the others. But we find the strong motive and deepest reason for this interview in the request of the elders. They knew of St. John's purpose to write, and feared he was putting it

off too long. Their wish may have seemed to him a providential intimation. Their hearts were gladdened by his promise, and—harmless self-congratulation of blameless men—it seemed to them at last that St. John wrote his Gospel at their request! He may, as the tradition states, have said that he would add something to what the other evangelists had said, and he may have written some things in part because they had not; just as he wrote nothing about the Temptation or the Transfiguration because they had left him nothing to write; but what he had in mind was that Gospel which had been the thought of his whole life long.

St. John's long tarrying seems strange! It contradicts the saying of the heathen, "Whom the gods love die young." And that his Master would have called his "beloved disciple" sooner than the rest is so natural a thought, that it may have led the old man, left alone, and, it might almost seem to others, forgotten, to repeat so often, in the confiding way of the aged, that *he was the one whom Jesus loved.* And yet how could his Master have better shown his love for the favorite disciple than by leaving him to complete and perfect the work of his brethren?

With the oral Gospel, with the Gospel written out by St. Matthew, by St. Mark, by St. Luke, and read in all the Christian assemblies, the need for St. John to make haste in his great work lay in the uncertainty of human life; but St. John's life was not uncertain. He knew that he should outlive all his brethren. He rested in the assurance that he

might meditate so long. In the persecution of Nero, in the exile in Patmos, what a comfort it was to know that death could not take him away in the midst of his years, with his work unfinished! What his Master said of his long tarrying almost seems casual and causeless, until this sufficient reason appears, that justifies St. John's taking the long time for meditation which he felt he needed, between the writing of his colleague's Gospel and his own. And in his last chapter St. John may have recorded those words of the Lord as much to explain his seeming slowness as for any other cause.

St. John ever had it in his heart to write that Gospel, and it was ever in his thoughts. His whole life went into it, the glow of youthful feeling, the strength of manhood, the wisdom of age. All that he had seen and felt and known of the glory of the only-begotten of the Father comes up before him as he dictates to his scribe. He speaks the last words that will ever come from that band of brothers whom the Lord chose to be Witnesses to Himself! How strong the impulse to select his facts from all the wonders of his memory! And how well he kept his compact with his dead comrade!

For the first time, perhaps, in all the centuries since it was made, let us now inquire for the reasons of the agreement between St. Matthew and St. John in Jerusalem, so faithfully kept long after Jerusalem was "trodden down," in a city so far away, in a world so changed. And if we are able to make out the reasons why St. Matthew and St. John decided that the earliest written Gospel should be

limited to the Galilean Ministry, it may be that, at the same time, we shall learn the reasons for the like limitation of the oral Gospel and of the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke.

All the Gospels are arguments to prove that Jesus is the Christ, through whom is salvation; St. Matthew and St. John had no idea that to make this truth clear and certain all that was said and done by the Lord must be written out; yet, when they conferred together, they may have thought it well, jointly, to draw a complete outline of His Ministry. It is also reasonable to suppose that they would avoid selecting the same facts.

They reached both of these ends by dividing between them the field of the Ministry in a geographical way. During the Roman age in Palestine (as every one knows) Judea was the southern county of the Holy Land, Galilee the northern county, and between them was the alien and hostile county of Samaria. The Ministry in Galilee was thus geographically separated from the Ministry in Judea: and this may very naturally have suggested the division that St. Matthew and St. John made of their field of labor. Yet the area of Palestine was small, the Romans kept the peace, Jerusalem was the religious capital of all its counties but Samaria, and the Jewish communities were every-where alike; hence the topographical reason is not fully sufficient to account for that division. But what force it had was strengthened by the feeling of the Jews for Judea—a peculiar feeling that disclosed itself to me while musing on the story of Petronius in the

graphic volumes of Josephus, those unexhausted treasure-mines of the geography and history of the Holy Land.

Judea is strictly a name for but one canton of the land of Israel. Geographically it is isolated. It is the water-shed of torrents that, to the east, rush down steep and barren ravines into the dissevering chasm of the Dead Sea, and, to the west, fertilize the sandy Philistine plain along the Great Sea—a plain that was never really Jewish. To the south it reached to the Desert, and on its southern confines lived those wild Idumean Jews despised and feared by the citizens of Jerusalem. On the north Judea joined the land of the Samaritans, with whom "the Jews had no dealings."

In the Roman Age in Palestine there were other than geographical reasons for the isolation of Judea. The Jews were estranged from what had once been the land of Israel. Jerusalem was still the center of the Jewish race, but had ceased to be the center of Palestine, and it was then the religious gathering place of a minority of its inhabitants. Judea then had little more to do with the Jews in Palestine, "outside of its own bounds," than with the Jews in Syria, in Egypt, in Asia Minor, in the East and in the Far-East, who made the Pilgrimage once in their lives, and sent their yearly offerings to the Temple. The Judeans then felt that Judea was the Holy Land, and this feeling was shared by all the Jews.

The Jews did not then speak of Palestine, outside of Judea, as their country. They did not feel outraged by its heathen worship. Judaism, couched

among the Judean hills like a lion driven to its lair, resigned the rest of the land to its enemies. The Judeans and all the Jews looked upon idolatry within what had been the other eleven cantons of Israel much as they looked upon the idolatry of Babylonia or of Egypt. This comes out in these words of Josephus, written at Rome, concerning the heathen temples erected by Herod: "They were built, not in Judea indeed, for that would not have been borne, but *in the country out of our bounds.*"

A Roman general came to Ptolemais, marching against Petra. His shortest road was through Judea; but its chief men came and besought him not to march through their country, because images that were worshiped were carried on the standards of the legions. The general went up to Jerusalem, looked into the matter, and changed the route of his army. Pilate brought the standards into the Holy City "in the night, without the knowledge of the people." Then multitudes went to him at Cæsarea, and "interceded with him many days." Wearied with their importunities, Pilate surrounded them with soldiers, and threatened them with death if they did not go home. Their reply was, that they would willingly die rather than their law should be transgressed; and Pilate, at last, ordered the ensigns to be withdrawn from the Holy City.

A decree went forth from the Emperor Caligula that his own statue should be set up and worshiped in the Temple. Pretonius, the proconsul of Syria, saw the danger of carrying out this decree, and he set about it with the blended patience and energy

of the Roman policy. Besides his own two legions, he got together as many auxiliary troops as he could. He came with a great army to Ptolemais, and wintered there. He thus delayed, thinking that the Jews, on learning how complete his preparations were, and having time to become familiar with the hateful idea, would be less likely to resist. Thousands flocked to Ptolemais, praying Petronius to give up his design, and calling on him to slay them first, for they could not suffer him to set up the image while they were alive. Seeing all this, Petronius rode across the country from Ptolemais to Tiberias, the better to judge of the temper of the people. Thousands beset him at Tiberias also, and with them came some of the princes of the Herodian house. The general was so moved by the persuasion of the princes and the distress of the people, that he took a course that was worthy of the best days of Rome. At the risk of his own life he suspended the execution of the decree till he could hear from Caligula, "thinking it fit for virtuous persons to die for the sake of such vast multitudes of men." At Rome the influence of Herod Agrippa, interposed with great tact, recalled the decree; but the imperial madman was so enraged with the proconsul that he dispatched an order that he should be put to death. Then what the Hebrews called "the finger of God" was seen. Another galley, still more swiftly pressing on to Syria with the news that the Emperor Caligula was slain, passed, on the sea, the galley that carried the death-warrant, and the life of Petronius was saved!

These facts prove that, in the Roman age, the passionate love of the Jews for the land of Israel found its only resting-place in Judea. The glory of Jerusalem still crowned its hills. Judea was the last stronghold of their religion. As some old family that has parted, piece by piece, with its land, till the few remaining acres are doubly sacred, is maddened at the thought of strangers coming to take the old homestead, so the Jews felt toward Judea. The rest of the land was no longer sacred. The gods of the heathen had their accursed temples in Joppa, in Ptolemais, at the foot of Mount Carmel, at the springs of the sacred Jordan, in Samaria, over the river, and along the plain by the sea. When the pilgrim-Jew, bound for Palestine, drew nigh to the harbor of Cæsarea, he turned away his angry eyes from the heathen temple set up there by King Herod, seen far over the sea. Every-where in the land of Israel, "outside of the bounds" of Judea, there had come in the "abominable" idolatry of the nations. The Jews had learned how to tolerate that; but they would have died to save holy Judea —all that was left them unprofaned of the Holy Land—from such pollution.

The Gospels have to do almost wholly with Jews, who were every-where one and the same people; and the breadth and sharpness of the difference between Judea and the rest of what had once been the land of Israel could not fully appear in the Gospels, because the Son of Abraham was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He passed by half-heathen Tiberias; and he may never have seen

Gadara,* only seven miles southward from the lake, that fine Greek city, whose temples, theaters, and rock-hewn tombs still witness to its greatness. In the Gospels little is seen of the idol-carving, festive Greeks, of the sea-faring Phœnicians, of the Syrians, of the clans of the Lebanon, and of the restless Arabs, who all made Galilee of the Gentiles (that is, of the nations—the name of its northern district, to which Capernaum belonged, yet a name that fitted the whole of Galilee) so unlike Judea. A mirror reflects what is before it; the mirror of the Gospel reflects the Jewish life in Galilee; and the Jewish life, with its families and feasts, its synagogues and Sabbaths, like the Jewish features, was the same in Galilee as in Judea.

Go where he might, the course of the Messiah was ever tending toward Jerusalem, for there only could be offered the sacrifice for the sin of the world. The Cross was the goal of his desire. "I have," He said, "a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." The sameness of the ways and manners of the Jews among whom he lived, and his singleness of aim, gave such oneness to the whole field of his Ministry that it requires a mental effort to apprehend how different was the feeling of St. Matthew, St. John,

* This city, one of several Greek cities east of the river, was rebuilt by Pompey the Great to please his freedman, Demetrius, who was born there; the same who, with one old soldier, paid the last honors to his dead body. In "the country of the Gadarenes," that is, in the territory of the city on the east of the lake, and near the village of Gergesa, from which Matthew, to whom the lake-region was minutely known, calls it "the country of the Gergesenes," our Lord healed the demoniacs.

and the rest of the disciples toward Galilee, though all save one were Galileans, from what it was toward Judea, and how widely separated in their thoughts was their Lord's life in Galilee from his life in Judea.

The division that St. Matthew and St. John made of the field of the ministry is farther explained by the reason already given why St. John was selected by the disciples as one of their two Evangelists—his knowledge of the things done in Judea and Jerusalem. This being greater than that of his colleague, Judea naturally fell to John, when geographical and other reasons led them to divide the field.

There remains a stronger reason for this division. In the only recorded hour of his youth in Jerusalem how unlike Jesus was from what he had been in the home in Nazareth! And as his spirit then so stirred within him and his words of wisdom were so beyond the thirteenth of his human years, how must his soul have been moved, what truth he must have revealed when he was there in his manhood! Surely it was fitting and natural that in his Father's house he should make known more of the mystery of the Father and the Son, and in Jerusalem reveal his deepest truths more than in Galilee.

Morally and mentally, the citizens of Jerusalem and the men of Galilee were somewhat unlike. In Galilee all the people but the hateful Nazarenes heard Jesus patiently. In Jerusalem the Messiah was confronted by adversaries whose trained reasoning powers had been sharpened by listening to, and debating with, subtle disputants, who came from the ends of the earth. Those hostile, haughty, in-

telligent watchers of every look and word sought by sudden interruptions, by crafty interrogations, to entangle him in his speech; and the utterance of thoughts so broken in upon was less consecutive than in Galilee.

St. Matthew, the only Evangelist who calls Jerusalem the Holy City, must have been sensitive to all the influences of Jerusalem. He could appreciate the difference between our Lord's utterances to Jews and to Galileans. He could discern in John that receptive, assimilative, piercing quality of mind and heart, then undeveloped, that is now so clearly seen in his Gospel. St. Matthew was the very man to mark in St. John the germ of that aptness to apprehend the meaning of such words as our Lord said in Jerusalem, which gave to St. John his supreme place among the holy Evangelists. I hold it good evidence of this, that St. Matthew left to St. John the recital of that discourse in the synagogue in Capernaum, which is so like those in Jerusalem. I think that his colleague, understanding the reason of this omission, made that discourse a part of his Gospel, though it was delivered in Galilee; for the concert of action between them was intelligent, not mechanical.

The Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John complement each other. Not finding the Judean Ministry in St. Matthew's Gospel, we look for it in that of St. John, and there we find it. Not finding the Galilean ministry in St. John, we look for it in St. Matthew, and there we find it. The two Gospels are the halves of a whole.

The reasons, then, for that division of their field by the two apostolic Evangelists (which on comparing their Gospels is so plain) were John's peculiar qualities, his knowledge of the ministry in Judea and Jerusalem, the feeling that Judea was a world by itself, and the geographical separation of Galilee from Judea. But in the oral Gospel, and in the second and third Gospels, there is the same limitation that there is in St. Matthew's to the land of Galilee; and the compact, agreement, or understanding that has so far availed seems to avail no more. Thrice we again face the same problem: but if solved in the case of the oral Gospel, it is solved for all. For, doubtless, the similar limitation of the second and third Gospels was dependent upon the limitation of the oral Gospel and of St. Matthew's Apostolic Gospel; and, in fact, the second Gospel was one of the oral Gospels. The real difficulty lies farther back. It is the limitation of the oral Gospel that has to be cleared up.

The starting-point here is the fact that it was the purpose of a Gospel to prove that Jesus was the Christ; for such being the end and aim of a Gospel, it could be reached although the Judean ministry were passed over. In the main, this is the explanation of the limitation of the oral Gospel to the Galilean ministry; and this, together with the disciples' selection of Matthew and John to write out the Gospels, and their knowing (as they must have known) the understanding between them, explains why the disciples, in their oral Gospel, ignored the Judean ministry. The two last facts are essen-

tial to the explanation. Without them the limitation cannot fully be accounted for, and that, by their help, it can be explained, is strong evidence of the selection and of the agreement. For it is very doubtful whether any thing short of an express revelation would have fully justified their passing over those events in Judea unless they could have said among themselves: "John knows all about those things. Of many of them some of us know nothing. He knows the whole, and, in due time, will write this out in our name. Let us give unity to our witness by framing the oral Gospel from that one circle of events whose facts are known to us all."

All else that has been said of the reasons for the course of the two Evangelists applies to that of the Disciples; for, as well as their Evangelists, they felt the difference between the two fields of the ministry. They also felt that their Master's teaching was, at times, of a kind the recording of which suited the genius of John better than of any other. In their case, as in that of St. Matthew, I find evidence of this in their not giving the discourse in Capernaum; and still stronger evidence in another fact. Of the week of the Passion their recital was so minute as to be a contrast to their broad delineation of the months and years that preceded it; yet the oral Gospel, like that of St. Matthew, passed over the discourse on the night of the Last Supper. I think I can understand the feeling that led to that silence. Of those four disciples, who with wonder listened as they sat on Mount Olivet, "over against the Temple," three tried to

repeat what they most deeply felt and could best remember of that prophetic word; but each one of the disciples felt within himself, and may have said, each to the other, "We must all leave the repeating of the farewell of our dying Lord to John, and may the Lord help him to say those solemn and tender words as he said them to us!"—a prayer that was granted.

With one other fact joined to these, the sought-for explanation becomes complete. In the oral Gospels (judging from that of St. Peter) there was greater unity and directness than in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, whose structure was more complicate. But in all those Gospels the life of the Lord was ever tending to the city that murdered the prophets, where it ended. It might have broken in upon their unity, had those Gospels included the early sojourn of the Lord in Jerusalem and Judea; for the character of his ministry up to the time of the imprisonment of John the Baptist* (though it cannot be called private) may be said to have been of a tentative kind. It was then the purpose of Jesus to test the fitness of the Jews to receive his Gospel, as compared with the Galileans among whom he had lived. The continuing of the Herald's proclamation after the Baptism and up to the time of his imprisonment, was probably meant to give time for this; and certainly it shows the King had not yet come.

The Herald never went into Jerusalem, and the

* See the last Gospel to verse 24 of chap. iii. The fullness of the ministry dates from verse 43 of chap. iv.

King went there with caution until his last visit, whose open boldness was in contrast with his other visits—for his time had come. The King's ministry began in the North. As had been foretold, the light shone out "in the land of Zebulon and Naphtali, in Galilee of the Gentiles," and not in the land of Judah. Therefore it would seem that the oral teaching of the disciples should have begun there; for, in thinking of this, we are to keep in mind that it was no more indispensable to a Gospel to record what our Lord said and did in that earlier period in Jerusalem than to record what He said and did while tarrying among the Samaritans. It was like those earnest men, in their oral teaching, to pass over the period of preparation for the fullness of the Ministry: and our conclusion is, that, like their Evangelist St. Matthew, they thought it best to leave all that was to be said of the early Judean ministry to St. John.

In this respect, the construction of the oral and of the written Gospels can be explained through the truth that it was the end and aim of a Gospel to reveal the life of the Saviour, so as to give the meaning of his sacrificial Death and to prove his glorious Resurrection; and, therefore, that a recital of his life in Galilee, of his Passion and Resurrection, might suffice for a Gospel. This being so, the explanation and defense of the construction of the oral and of the written Gospels, at this point, is a valid one. And yet the end and aim of a Gospel here needs to be presented more explicitly, because it has become so common to hold that it was the

end and aim of a Gospel to make known Christ Jesus as our *teacher and example.* This puts one truth into the place where another truth belongs. A truth out of its own place and in the place of another truth, has somewhat the effect of an untruth; and here this makes the construction of the Gospels inexplicable. For, surely, if such had been the end and aim of a Gospel, then the disciples and the Evangelists should have labored to reproduce every word that our Lord uttered, and to tell every thing that he did.

But, as there is danger here of being misunderstood, let me say, *it is written* that Christ Jesus is our teacher and our example. He is our example, for he ever gave up his own will to the will of the Father. He is our teacher through the truth that ever fell from his lips. And I need tell none of the few who read my books that I have ever dwelt upon the truth, that the Eternal Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, that he hath ever taught and ever teaches in the things that he made, in the course of all events, in the ordering of each life, and in his Holy Scriptures.

It was one of the many aims of the Holy Scriptures to reveal Christ Jesus as teacher and example, but so direct and single was the purpose of his inspired Evangelists to reveal Christ as the Redeemer, that this was held by them in strict subordination to that higher purpose, even that manifestation of his Atonement through which, in the highest possible degree, Christ became teacher and example. In

this the Gospels are in harmony with the time and with the facts in the Saviour's Ministry; for its time was too short for teaching to have been a pre-eminent purpose, and its success was too small. He wrought as a teacher in showing to the children of Israel, by word and deed, that he was the Messiah; but he convinced of this only his disciples and a few others. For a time the people heard him gladly, yet the *immediate* effect of the Sermon on the Mount was not as great as that of the sermon St. Peter preached after the life and death of Christ were interpreted by the Holy Ghost.

Those who say that all that there is in the golden rule and in the Lord's prayer had been uttered before by sages and saints go rather beyond the truth, making the partial equal to the complete; yet our Lord did say that his own definition of duty, "love to God and love to man," was the sum of the Law and the Prophets. And when the Lord promised that the Holy Ghost should guide to all truth, he disclaimed the office of teacher—that is, of the Great Teacher—so often erroneously thought to have been *pre-eminently* his office during his life on earth.

The eternal Word did not take upon himself the form of man, to school-master the human race. In the Scriptures none of the other ends of his coming are exalted to an equality with the Atonement. The Epistle to the Hebrews proves from the Law and the Prophets what the Gospels prove from his life on earth, that He, who was in the beginning with God, and who was God, came to manifest the divine mercy through his death. He himself said that the

other signs that he was the Christ were as nothing in comparison with the sign of the Prophet Jonah; that is, the sign of his own death and resurrection.

The inexorable duties of to-day leave no surplus virtue with which to make up for the sins of yesterday; and a man who cannot atone for his own sins cannot for the sins of others. The sinless Son of Man and Son of God could do this, and he did this. In his Atonement is *the reason* for his Incarnation; and, through the logic inhering in the evolvement of thought from thought, they who deny the atonement come at last to deny the incarnation. Thus they degrade the Christ from the place he holds among Christians to the place of human teachers and examples. They claim a high place for some of these, for Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha, Socrates, Mohammed—a place that may be allowed in spite of their sins and errors; but they were men. The difference in gentleness, in wisdom, or in force of will between them and other men was but a difference in degree. They were great and they did much; but it was insignificant compared with what was done for the human race by those forgotten benefactors who kindled the first fire, forged the first bar of iron, struck the first note of music, or framed the oldest alphabet. What those teachers knew of truth, beyond others of their time, was of less moment than the truth that all men have ever known in common: for all have ever known that it is appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment; and what did Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, Bud-

dha, Mohammed, teach that equaled these common truths? The Word, who enlighteneth every man, taught them all the truth they knew. Whatever they wrought of righteousness they wrought through the Spirit of Christ; and, if their sins and errors have been forgiven, and they have attained unto everlasting life, it is because Christ the Saviour died for sinners.

The Seed of the woman bruised the head of the serpent. On the divine Son of Mary the iniquity of us all was laid. The angel said to St. Joseph that the child of the holy Virgin would save his people from their sins. That was his work! Nothing else that he did is to be named with it—not even when he called for the heavens and the earth and they came. On the cross he "finished" the revelation of God, not only for those of woman born, but for all the intelligent creatures that now are, or shall hereafter be, in all the worlds of the one indivisible universe he made. Then was "finished" that revelation of God through which He became forever "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person," to angels as to men. That nothing is said in the creed of Christ's teachings, nothing of his miracles, nothing of his example, was a thing ordained. There the Incarnation and the Atonement are strikingly definite in their human relations, yet there nothing is suffered to share our thoughts with the incarnation and the atonement: "He was born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate."

THUS I have proved what I said in the Introduction, that some of the higher truths of our holy religion are confirmed by the study of the Construction of the Gospels. For, by means of the truth that Christ died to atone for the sin of the world, which is revealed by the prophets, and is the burden of the Epistles, the construction of the Gospels can be explained and defended. In the light of the great central truth—the sacrificial death of Christ, which his true Church teaches and the nations believe—all other Christian truths and facts justify themselves to the conscience and to the reason. But if the teaching of truth, and the setting an example, be held to be the pre-eminent aim and glory of Christ Jesus, then it is not possible to vindicate the inspiration of His Disciples and of His holy Evangelists; it is not possible even to vindicate their common sense.

CHAPTER VIII.

INSPIRATION OF THE GOSPELS.

TWO of the Witnesses were set by the rest to write out the joint-witness of them all. Providentially two of the brethren were associated with them in that work—one the amanuensis of the Chief Apostle, the other the companion of the Apostle to the Gentiles; and to their Gospels apostolic sanction gave equal authority with those of St. Matthew and St. John. The promise of the Lord that the Holy Spirit should aid his disciples in their witness to himself attaches to the whole of this testimony of the four Evangelists; for it is the testimony of those to whom the promise was given. Where it did not come directly from his chosen Witnesses, they made it their own by their own acts. And St. John, who more than any other Evangelist brought from out the treasure-house of his own memory, in the name of all his brethren wrote, "*We* beheld his glory."

When the Twelve were sent forth on their first mission our Lord told them (in words fully coming to pass after his own ministry on earth had ended) that they would be brought before governors and kings; and he said, "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak. It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit

of your Father that speaketh in you." Re-uttering this on the Mount of Olives, he told his disciples that *both thoughts and words* should be given them: "Settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom that your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." His promise of divine aid then reached *to their words*, and surely it may have reached that far in the inspiration of their joint-witness to himself, given once for all and for all time in the holy Gospels. Why not? A question that is here in lieu of a volume of argument.

Though familiar with the thought of the divine aid of the Witnesses, we can hardly call to mind the promises of such aid without being surprised at their fullness, and at their correspondence with the state of the disciples then; and with that future, to which, before his crucifixion, Christ Jesus looked forward. "Now I go away, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? Sorrow hath filled your hearts. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine. When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth, and he will show you things to come." How perfectly all this agrees with the feelings of the disciples, and with what they themselves afterward became! Then they could neither understand nor bear, what, before the sun rose and set again, they knew only too well. And how wonderful the change when

the Resurrection and the coming of the Holy Ghost transformed them into Apostles! How they were guided into all the truth * in Christ, as in the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians! And how they were shown the things that were to come, as in the Apocalypse!

"The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." In accordance with common usage, these unlimited words are limited by the subject itself; they mean all things needed by the disciples in the work they had to do, and in that sense they were to be received by those who heard them. But may there not have been in them a larger sense, an infinite meaning, to be unfolded through endless ages? It may be easy to say what his words must have meant to those who heard them, yet who shall say what their full meaning was to the Lord himself? In those words there may have been to him a prophecy and a promise of the increase of his people in knowledge that now is coming to pass in the earth, and their fulfillment in this and in other worlds may be far beyond the compass of the imagination.

Even in the further promise in the next words, "And he shall bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you," our Lord may have had in mind all his people forever.

With much, and it may be with all, that our Lord said to his disciples, there blended some thought of others—in his last prayer he prayed for

* The word has the article in the Greek—the Truth.

all those who, through them, should believe on his name:—yet this promise is to be construed as relating primarily, and it may be solely to his Witnesses. It is a promise of all the divine aid they needed in the fulfilling of their witness, and hence it implies more than a quickening of their memories. There was need of more than such aid; for it was not in the power of the children of men rightly to apprehend and truly to describe the Son of God. In the holy Gospels the promise was fulfilled in the selection his Evangelists made from all the Lord said and did; and I would rest their inspiration *mainly* on the ground that, in their selection, they were so guided by the Spirit of Truth, that their portraiture of the Son of Man and Son of God has in each of their Gospels, and in the four Gospels taken together, a harmony and completeness that is beyond the possibilities of human genius.

"When the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you, from the Father, he shall testify of me, and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." Here the disciples are spoken of as human witnesses; they bear witness because they have been with Christ from the beginning. And St. Peter gave the same reason in the same words why Justus and Matthias were selected, that one of them might be chosen to fill the vacancy in the number of the Witnesses.

The question whether the divine element that entered into the witness of the Evangelists for higher ends, also secured an accuracy *in every detail of every thing they touched upon* beyond what

human testimony is capable of in itself and by its own laws, is often discussed, as if those, who hold to the inspiration of those Witnesses, must answer that question in the affirmative. This assumption is usually associated with a narrow idea of the range of inspiration; and it puts what may have been one of the minor results of inspiration on an equality with others of greater moment, as will appear if we reflect on the nature of human testimony.

Observation has convinced lawyers that the imperfection of the human faculties is such that imperfection in human testimony, like friction in machinery, may be so reduced as to be almost inappreciable, but cannot be gotten rid of. And I think it would be the authoritative judgment of the legal profession that in the testimony of well-informed, careful, and honest witnesses as to unimportant details of complicated events and trains of events, differences and even contradictions would be found when the testimony of each was closely compared with itself and with that of the other witnesses; and that in such cases, if the witnesses agreed as to all the important facts, their differences, and even their contradictions, as to incidents to which their attention was not specially called, and which the court and the jury take to be of no consequence, would confirm rather than weaken their evidence by showing their testimony was free from influence or collusion.

In its very nature, human testimony is imperfect; and yet, within variable limits, on the whole well understood and agreed upon, it is one of the guides

of human life. Generally it is honest; truth, not falsehood, is the common utterance; and witnesses are apt to be careful as to what their words are to prove. Their opinion is generally right as to what details are unimportant; they are inaccurate usually at points where they would have guarded their words had it been of consequence, or as to things hardly noticed by the limited human faculties when not specially called to mark them. Such inaccuracies come under the legal maxim, *De mimimis non curat Lex*—The law takes no account of trifles.

The words perfect and imperfect have only a relative meaning. As applied to aught save the divine, *perfect* can only mean that a thing is as good as it is in its nature to be. A thing is not imperfect, then, in the sense of bad, because it is not better than it can be; and human testimony is perfect when, to establish a fact, it goes as far as human testimony can go. The divine element in the witness of the Evangelists would be no less divine because of so-called imperfections that inhere in the nature of human testimony—so-called imperfections, I say, meaning to question whether they be such in any proper sense.

But this has nothing to do with such an alleged contradiction as that Matthew makes Bethlehem the home of the Holy Family, and St. Luke makes it Nazareth; nor with such a mistake as St. Luke is said to have made in connecting with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem a taxation said to have taken place some years afterward. If there were such errors and contradictions in the Gospels they would

destroy the credibility of the Evangelists by showing gross ignorance or carelessness; but the alleged minor differences that make up the larger part of the current argument against the Gospels come under the old legal maxim.

I do not know that superhuman accuracy, in each and all of the minor details, was necessary to give confidence to the testimony of the holy Evangelists. If it were, then it would seem that the superhuman Power who brought about this superhuman result would have protected every minutiæ of the transcripts of that testimony. But in the manuscripts of the Gospels differences are found; thus, our version follows manuscripts that give the distance of Emmaus from Jerusalem at sixty furlongs, and the manuscript found by Tischendorf, in the convent on Mount Sinai, gives it at one hundred and sixty furlongs. Still the text of the whole of the New Testament is in a much more perfect state than that of other ancient writings; the variations in its hundreds of manuscripts are checks upon each other, and by far the greater number of them are such as do not perceptibly affect the sense. They may have been permitted as safeguards against the idolatry of the letter, and they invalidate no article of the faith.

Even on the theory of *verbal inspiration*, I see no ground for maintaining that there is no such imperfection in the testimony of the Evangelists as merely stamps it as human testimony. It has become too common to take the phrase verbal inspiration, and to argue as if it were the exposition of a complicate and difficult doctrine with its explana-

tions, limitations, and reasons, and not merely its convenient symbol; and thus a good name has become an unfortunate one. But word and thought are inseparable; and those who reject verbal inspiration, rightly understood, must logically deny all inspiration.

Yet I would not be understood to hold that there are inaccuracies of any sort in the holy Gospels. St. Augustine wrote to St. Jerome, who concurred with him: "I firmly believe that no one of the writers of Scripture has ever fallen into any error in writing." This was the faith of Christians in the fifth century, and in this century its truth as to the Gospels has been established as a matter of evidence. For never was testimony more severely tested than that of the Evangelists, and their accuracy has been proved beyond all reasonable doubt.

There are critics who think there are many errors in the old Hebrew Scriptures, but those who are anxious to find mistakes are apt to find them. Concerning the notions of those critics, opinions are contradictory among themselves. Such criticism has much to learn and much to unlearn. Thus: the Mosaic cosmology has been decried as unscientific and childish; yet those who treat it thus know too little of ancient ideas concerning Time and the World, to understand the terms in which they are expressed. When the scientific revelations of the first chapter of Genesis are interpreted as an ancient Oriental sage would have interpreted them, they anticipate cosmological truths which modern science has of late begun to see. Again: even some or-

thodox authorities say that the dates in several of the historical books of the Old Testament are in hopeless confusion, yet scholars of finer insight see that those dates (with the exception of a few clerical errors) must be correct.

If there be in those ancient records, that recite the history of the central nation for thousands of years, seeming errors that the mistakes of transcribers of manuscripts for so many ages do not account for, and that, with our present knowledge, are inexplicable, and though their moral and spiritual revelations be incomplete, these things need not trouble our faith in Hebrew Scripture. There the time-plan of the world is so unrolled before the patriarch Noah that he foretells that God will enlarge Japheth, and he shall worship in the tabernacle of Shem, thus foreshadowing the historic relations of continents then unpeopled—Europe, from the days of Alexander until now, ever passing over into Asia to dwell, and Asia ever giving to Europe religion. There the time-plan of the world is further unfolded to the Prophet Daniel, so that he foretells the fourth and last universal empire, and beyond that, the dominion of the Son of Man. There it is promised to Father Abraham that in his Son—for St. Paul interprets the prophecy not of many but of one—shall all the nations be blessed; and thus the line of the fulfillment of the word of Hope in Eden is fixed in one people, and then, by other sure words of prophecy, in one family; and the time-limit of the promise and the town in which it is to come to pass are made known. All the Hebrew

Scripture is a prophecy of One for whose coming the world would be made ready, so that all flesh might see his glory, and the plan of all human history unrolls according to the pattern shown to the Hebrews of old. In that Scripture the delineations of the power, the wisdom, and the mercy of the Lord—as in Psalm ciii—have no parallel in the writings of men. Those sacred Scriptures lead onward and upward to Gospels wherein our Lord himself vouches for their inspiration. And we may well rest content in what St. Augustine and St. Jerome believed to be true of all Scripture, if it can be proved to be true of the Gospels, even though the difficulties of conclusively proving this at each and every point in those very ancient Hebrew Scriptures should as yet be insurmountable.

Of the Gospels it can be, and it has been, proved. For accuracy the freely-given testimony of the Evangelists comes into a class by itself. In the Gospels there are no contradictions. There are satisfactory explanations of almost all their seeming differences, and of the four or five that alone remain, explanations have been given that are, at least, quite possible. To ask more than this, as to such ancient and minute documents, of those who hold to the plenary inspiration of the Gospels, is the mere fanaticism of unbelief.

It has been established, over and over again, that the accuracy of agreement in minute details in the Gospels, is such as was never reached in the testimony of any four witnesses to complicated events; and in their testimony there is a multitude of unde-

signed coincidences of so recondite and subtile a kind that they prove to demonstration that the accuracy of the Evangelists is beyond the nature of human testimony. Every one dismisses the thought of any collusion between them—it is but just to say that skeptics reject it as unworthy to be entertained —because the Evangelists so evidently intended to tell the truth; and it should be dismissed for this decisive reason also:—no collusion, no comparing of what they wrote, no rewriting of what they had written, no art or device, could ever have wrought the harmony of their witness. Any good lawyer, familiar in courts with the variances and contradictions not only of false witnesses colluding to deceive, but of honest, intelligent witnesses, earnestly desiring to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, on closely, fairly, and without prejudice comparing the witness of the four Evangelists, and testing, according to the severest legal rules of evidence, their agreement as to facts in all its forms and in all its depths, would come to the conviction that their harmony was not only beyond the reach of artifice, but beyond the possibilities of merely human testimony.

I cite the words of one, who, early in life, began "his researches into the exact and delicate meanings of the Greek tenses, moods, prepositions and particles, and, in later years, brought to the study of the New Testament a complete mastery over the structure of the Greek language"—firmly persuaded that a faithful study of the holy Gospels, whether in the Greek or in the English only, creates in

every candid soul the feeling which he utters with such heartfelt conviction:

"A very minute investigation of the Greek of the New Testament, studied grammatically with a careful consideration of the real and true meaning of every case, tense, and mood, of every particle, even of the very order of the words, so far as my knowledge of the niceties and exquisite discriminations of the language has enabled me to master the subject, has only served to deepen the convictions that the holy Scriptures are indeed in very truth the word of God, inspired by his Holy Spirit; that they are in the original minutely, scrupulously, marvelously exact in every word, syllable, and letter. I cannot express too strongly the awe and admiration with which I rise daily from this microscopic study of the New Testament. The more minutely I look into the force, the exactness, the deep meaning of even single words, the profounder becomes my reverence, the more awful my sense, of the importance of every jot and every tittle of Holy Writ. Deeply and awfully convinced I am that the Scriptures are not merely the work of good, holy, inspired men, but that they are really the voice of God, that we must approach them, therefore, with the confidence, the reverence, the unshaken belief in their correctness, truthfulness, depth, importance, and infinite wisdom, due to words which issue from the mouth of God himself." *

* Rev. William Sewell, D.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford, author of "Introduction to the Dialogues of Plato," etc., etc. Died A.D. 1874.

It is the glory of the Gospels that through their inspired witness to the Son of Man and Son of God, all may attain to a knowledge of the life of the Redeemer and Lord, as true, as real, as that of his own disciples—may come into their places and in this wisdom "have fellowship with them." Yet it is never to be forgotten that the Gospel is a book sealed, till its seals are broken by the Spirit; *for it is written*, "*No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.*" There is always the need of the Holy Spirit, by whom the Evangelists bore true witness to the Lord; and the Holy Spirit will ever make their witness a living witness to all who in sincerity pray for his help—even as it is written by the brother of our Lord, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him."

PART SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

STYLE OF THE EVANGELISTS.

IF the chief end and aim of a Gospel be seen—if it be clear that the construction of each Gospel is so fitted to its purpose that of itself it is a sufficient witness to the Saviour for men to believe in him—if the correspondence of the apostolic Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John and the affinity of the written with the oral Gospel be well understood—then the answers to many questions that unbelief has raised and the unreasonableness of much of the doubt concerning the Gospels are plain. A knowledge of these things clears up so much concerning the Gospels, that we might almost be thankful to infidels for driving us to thoroughness in studying all that pertains to their construction. It were well if we were as earnest to learn as they are to destroy.

There is much that has to be thought out before all that has been said against the Gospels as fragments and traditions can be cleared up; but before treating of those things that in the eyes of some have given this character to writings whose unity and whose truthfulness is divine, let a word be said

of their style. Each Gospel resembles each other, for each leads to the Cross. All the Evangelists had the same purpose, yet each of the Gospels has a character of its own. St. Matthew could not once draw such a picture as St. Peter always draws; St. Mark could not have planned St. Matthew's Gospel; neither could have written St. Luke's Gospel; nor could St. Luke have written either of theirs. And yet the first three Evangelists, from the order, the facts, and the phrases common to them all, may seem to have the same style. But there are few who think of the style of the Evangelists at all; and this can have no higher praise, for a good style does not draw attention from the thought to itself. To speak only when there is something to be said, to say just that and no more, is the perfection of utterance, and this perfection belongs to the Evangelists.

In their writings the thought is plainly seen. Such transparency is a quality of style that comes from the character of a writer's mind, and cannot be given by training in the schools. Some book-learned men quietly assume that the style of Matthew, Mark, and John is poverty-stricken, because they were not book-learned men. But ornament would have been out of place in a Gospel, and the Evangelists were too earnest to think of it. Yet nothing is more readable than the Gospels. Nothing is more translatable. Their word-painting is so clear in outline that when transferred into another language the picture is there, the frame only is changed. The thoughts of the writers of the Epis-

tles are more with those to whom they wrote; those of the Evangelists are with the Lord only. His overshadowing glory makes them afraid. Their sense of the divinity of the man Christ Jesus is in their hush of awe, their stillness of adoration. The Lord is in his holy temple, let the earth keep silence before Him!

The time is nigh at hand when unbelievers will change their tone, and say the Evangelists were the great masters of history, and the power of the Gospel is due to their literary excellence. In this there will be just enough of truth to do the most harm; for the literary excellence of the holy Gospels is one of the many elements of their power. Goethe—the great critic in the kingdom of this world, whose like has not arisen in the kingdom of grace—said of Sir Walter Scott, "I see in his writings a new art, with laws of its own;" and that is true of the Holy Evangelists. "The Ariosto of the North" taught others to do some things better than he did them himself; but the divine historic art of the Evangelists remains, and that divine art will remain, unparalleled and inimitable.

Could I parade the good sayings of men any thing but good, a long roll of names, and with them a long roll of religious names, might be called to witness to the literary excellence of the Gospels. But the whole of this critical estimate has two sides to it. Even Westcott can speak of the style of the Gospels as "confused," and most critics hold that the Gospels come far short of what might be desired in a historic point of view. I find it one of the

causes of this underestimate of the historic merit of the Evangelists, that they do not mark times and seasons, and set forth events in chronological sequence, with a painful and confusing exactness. For deficiencies rashly asserted and unwisely conceded even Ellicott can give as a reason, "That ancient chroniclers gave little heed to dates, and that the detailed sequence of biographical narrative was unknown among the Jews." The reply, like the accusation, has only an illusive show of pertinency. The writers of the Old Testament took pains to give their dates as well as they could without the help of that humble but useful thing, the almanac. The Hebrew Evangelists were not deficient in marking dates. They had their reasons for omitting to mark some epochs, and they mark some with dates of their own. Psychologic, moral, and spiritual dependencies were more to them than chronological ones; and their critics often mistake a grouping of events by laws of higher power for a disregard of the law of time. What seems to them disorder is order too philosophic for their comprehension.

To the Evangelists actions were of value as they witnessed to the soul from which the action came. They give more than the outward form of things. In tracing the spiritual sequence of events their sight is quick, and fine, and far. In the Gospels the future is in the present, and there nothing takes us wholly by surprise.

The notion that the Evangelists were heedless of times and seasons comes from their not giving the day and the year of the birth of our Lord more than

from any thing else. There is nothing in St. Matthew's Gospel from which that day and year can be determined. The blank is not filled by St. Mark; nor by St. Luke, usually so careful as to times; and St. John, the last Evangelist and last Apostle, is silent concerning those dates, like the Evangelists before him. This silence came from carelessness, or from ignorance, or design. No one who marks the thoughtfulness of the Evangelists will say that it came from carelessness. No one who marks that in St. Luke's Gospel the Blessed Mother herself tells of the birth of her Son and Lord, or who remembers that her home was in the house of St. John, will say it was from ignorance. All who believe in the inspiration of the holy Gospels will confess there was some divine reason why His Evangelists say nothing from which the time of the birth of the Lord can be determined, even as they say nothing of his form and features, and thus tempt no man to the irreverence of trying to mold the image of the Lord, or to picture his likeness.

By *their silence* the Holy Scriptures often teach as plainly as by their words. The silence of the Holy Scripture as to the day and year of the birth of the Lord was ordained; and God has so hidden both of those dates that man will never find them out. From this speaking silence of His Scriptures there seems to be the sure inference, that the celebration of a day as Christ's birthday will not forever tend to the highest degree of faith in Him as the Eternal Word. The divinely-ordained silence of the Blessed Mother and of the holy Evangelists as to

the day of the Lord's birth seems to teach that the Incarnation, and, by irresistible inference, the Atonement also, belong to all time, and not to any one time; and that the setting apart of days as peculiarly theirs has no place in the worship of Him who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. And my argument is, that here, where the charge of not setting forth times and seasons bears hardest against the holy Evangelists, just here is seen *the finger of God.*

Near the beginning of the earliest Gospel there is a verse that more, perhaps, than any thing else, save the silence as to the time of the Lord's birth, has led to an undervaluing of the historic qualities of the Evangelists: "Now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Here the Nativity seems to be mentioned rather for the sake of another event than for its own sake; and its date is no date at all, for it has the breadth of a long reign.

This most unfortunate of verses has baffled the transatlantic scholars; whether orthodox or not, they are well agreed that its geographic and historic terms give no means of knowing whence the pilgrims came, or who the pilgrims were. There is nothing very strange in this, for the geography of Western Asia dates from this century, and the historic criticism of the Scriptures dates not much further back than its beginning. In its better

forms that criticism has met with good success, though here it failed, where success was easier than failure. And yet here scholars can hardly be said to have failed, for they did not try to succeed. St. Matthew's terms had no definite meaning to them, and they assumed that there is very little meaning in them. And if they really be as meaningless as they are to their critics, then, taken together with St. Matthew's strange way of alluding to the birth of the Lord, and his omission to name the day and the year thereof, they would countenance the error that this Evangelist, at least, was deficient in historic qualities.

But elsewhere I have shown that by his term Magi (wisely kept in the Vulgate, but in the English version vaguely mistranslated wise men) St. Matthew told those to whom he wrote, who those pilgrims were. The meaning of his term was plain to them, and he knew it. In his father's time Herod had fled before the Parthian horsemen in Judea. In his time a great many Jews—as many as there were in Palestine—lived in the provinces of the Persian (then the Parthian) Empire. Of those were the "dwellers in Mesopotamia, the Parthians, Medes, Elamites," who were present at the Pentecost. The chief lines of the traffic of the East and the Far-East with the Phœnician sea-coast and with the land of Egypt, ran through Palestine. The Jews of Palestine were as familiar with the Parthian Empire as the British are now with India; and hence all the Jews of Palestine were as familiar with the term Magi (the name of the priests of the

Persian, and of its successor the Parthian, Empire) as commercial London is to-day with the name Brahmin.

St. Matthew's geographic terms, the East and the Far-East, the only ones at his command, curiously well fitted his purpose. They clearly pointed out both the empire from whence the pilgrims came, and in what province of that empire they were when the star of our Lord shone into our heavens. His terms—colloquial household terms in Palestine—were not so clear outside of that country; and, where his Gospel passed over from Asia into Europe, their meaning became obscure, and it was lost sight of in the Dark Ages.

At every point the first two chapters of St. Matthew can be vindicated; but here I can only further say that, as St. Matthew intended to mark the fulfilling of prophecy, his bare mention of Bethlehem in the first verse of his second chapter seems to make against the carrying out of his manifold design, but only for an instant, for almost immediately he calls in the wisdom of all the scribes to witness that Bethlehem was the foreordained birthplace. And though St. Matthew, like the other Evangelists, does not name the day or the year of our Lord's birth, it should be noted that before the chapter ends he narrows down its time to near that of Herod's death; and in this there is more than at first appears, for the end of Herod's reign was an epoch with the Jews.

The most important date after our Lord's birth is that of the full beginning of his Ministry; and

here, again, the charge against the Evangelists of deficiency in marking times and seasons is countenanced by their not giving the day, the month, or the year of that beginning. But God's dates are not all in the almanac. His Scriptures mark times and seasons in ways of their own. To his inspired Evangelists that month and year seemed hardly of more consequence than the hour or the minute of the hour; but they knew of a divine chronology in which that date was of spiritual significance, and there they recorded it: "Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison He departed into Galilee. . . . *From that hour* He began to preach." Thus St. Matthew; and thus St. Mark, "Now after that John was cast into prison Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel and saying, The time is fulfilled."

An earlier Ministry, and in Judea, is described in the first three chapters of the last Gospel. Toward the end of that course of events St. John, by a passing allusion to the near imprisonment of the Baptist, recognizes the date which the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark had made well known to the whole Congregation. Before that time the acts of our Lord, like those of an heir to a vacant throne before his coronation, were of kingly significance; yet two of the earlier Evangelists carefully mark that the King did not put forth his full regal power until after his herald was cast into prison.

It is written, "The wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain."

St. Matthew and St. Mark teach a lesson, beyond even the lesson in that instructive Scripture, through the relation they disclose between the imprisonment of the Herald and the full beginning of the ministry of the King. They teach that the hour of a seeming victory of the darkness is the hour of a real advance of the light. They reveal that when iniquity reaches its bound, then the word of God goes forth with full power. So it was when Christ Jesus began His Ministry. So it was when He suffered on the Cross. So it was when the first martyr died. So it will ever be in the kingdom of grace.

To this all history testifies; but no one can bind all the sheaves in the Holy Land. We must leave this truth, and glance again at the opening of St. Matthew's Gospel. After relating the visit of the Magi, the flight, the return, and the dwelling in Nazareth, St. Matthew goes right on to say, "*In those days* came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness;" and to him Jesus goes for baptism. Here there is a time for which there seems to be no measure of any kind; yet, on looking more closely, it is the interval from childhood to manhood. All the Evangelists thus pass over times of which they have nothing to say; as when St. Luke passes from the presentation of the holy Child in the temple to the dwelling again of the holy family in Nazareth, or from the Temptation to the Ministry in Galilee. The Evangelists avoid interrupting the onflowing of their Gospels by any methodical interposition of dates; yet sometimes they mark the

very hour; as when, though half a century had passed, St. John so naturally remembers that it was about the tenth hour of the day when Jesus first spoke to him. St. Luke dates his narrative as precisely as the old Greek chroniclers. The other Evangelists make us feel that they could have done so; and one who reads their Gospels, in sympathy with their spiritual aim, never feels any lack of chronology.

That St. Luke was not an eye-witness of the Lord may have had something to do with his careful marking of dates, for its effect was somewhat as if he had been much farther off, in time, from the life of Christ than the other Evangelists; yet, like the others, he had heard the Gospel orally taught, and the style of his Gospel, like theirs, is colloquial. When those who have been actors in great events talk about them, they give little heed to the date of those events, because they are already dated in the minds of those with whom they are conversing. And for the date of the Gospels there is, it seems to me, a delicately persuasive evidence in the fact that their writers deal with dates just as men naturally do when speaking of things that took place in their own generation. Thus, St. Mark unconsciously proves the date of his Gospel by not giving to it any date at all, and by his, at once, bringing in John the Baptist as one whom every body knew; for though writing in the city of Rome, and though all the world has read what he wrote, yet while writing he had much in mind the little colony of Roman Jews, whose memory or knowledge of the

Baptist was like his own. And in the Holy Gospels the general and the special time-marks are as many as can be reasonably looked for. They are in the handwriting of eye-witnesses, and the most masterly invention could not have given such fine touches of verisimilitude to fabrications in a later age.

CHAPTER II.

TIME OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

I AM now to consider a peculiarity of St. Matthew's Gospel through which, *by chance*, I discovered the time and the circumstances in which that Gospel was written :—by chance, I say, as did the soldier who said so well, " Chance is but a name for the unknown combinations of infinite power." And, as a fitting preface to this discussion, I confide to my friendly and tireless reader the slowly wrought out purpose that led, at last, to that chance discovery. In my boyhood the old Roman days seemed to live again as I construed Cicero's oration against Catiline, but I could not make the days of the disciples so life-like. My imagination could not cross the great gulf between the Occident and the Orient. The world of the East seemed unreal, it was so unlike the Western world: though, in spiritual insight, in depth of conviction, in the turmoil of passion, the calm of repose, the Eastern world is the more real world of the two. Little then was known of the East, of its geography, its history, its ways of life. The apparition of John the Baptist then startled the *historic sense*, as in his own time it startled the *Jewish conscience:* for then there were none to tell (what Farrar and Geikie

have not yet found out) that John was sent in his childhood away into the desert, was brought up for safety in the black tents, and that he came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, in dress and manner of life, an Arab, such as the traveler now meets with in the plain of Esdraelon. There was nothing like Judea and the Jews, in the whole Eastern world. Robinson and Smith were then in the Holy Land, busy with its geography, but the unequaled results of their joint labors had not been given to the world. There were some means of learning about the ways of the populace of old Rome, what, with Calmet's help, could not be learned of those of the people of Jerusalem; yet I longed to make myself as much at home in the Holy City as, whether truly or not, I seemed to be in Rome. "A boy's thoughts are long thoughts." The seed then buried in some corner of the heart was to spring up, but years passed before the bearing of fruit.

In my college days I gained a bird's-eye view of the fields of knowledge as then mapped out and explored, and I made up my mind to keep up with the thought of my time. I saw its currents sweeping more and more against the bulwarks of the faith. Yet neither the daring that assailed the holy Scriptures nor the questions as to their construction, to which no answer came, troubled my faith. My knowledge of the masterpieces of human genius sufficed for me to say, as I read some of the plainer or grander words of Holy Writ, "These are not the thoughts of man." Whether the problems of unbelief were solved in my life-time or not,

I knew that time would bring their solution, as it had brought the solution of the problem of the Zodiac of Denderah. I listened to the doubts that troubled the air, in the spirit that believes and yet inquires, and would not suffer what I *did* know to be contradicted by what I did *not* know. I well remember the one hour when, wearily revolving the monotonous, scientific, historic, and critical questionings of the Bible, I said in my heart, nothing doubting, "Open the book and read; the Word of God will prove itself worthy of the Creator, as do the heavens, the mountains, and the sea." The will can hold the mind in abeyance, so that, for the moment, the known seems almost as if unknown, and thus old truths may have something of the freshness of new truth. Calling this power into play, I opened the New Testament and read page on page. The world of Scripture opened before me, as I read, with a glory that I felt as though I could make others see; and the time came when that feeling shaped my life.

I determined to carry out my youthful aspiration to make myself at home in Jerusalem. But I did not begin as far back as the days of the patriarchs. I thought it better suited the shortness of life to join the caravan of forty thousand pilgrims who, five hundred years before the birth of Christ, went up from their Babylonian exile to the desolation of Jerusalem, and there laid anew the foundations of the Hebrew State. I dwelt there, in thought, until the power of the Persians passed away, and, following in the footsteps of Alexander, colonies of Greeks

came building cities and teaching their language to Syria; and thence onward, through the glorious restoration of Independence, through the hateful coming in of the Romans and the evil tyranny of the Idumæan Herod.

The six hundred preceding years are the avenue through which to approach the years from the death of King Herod to the fall of Jerusalem; yet I found, to my surprise, that they were among the least explored periods of history; and, but for Dr. Raphall, their history would have been a repellant roll of meaningless events. The learned rabbi taught me how to feel the pulses of that time. Its study became a fascination. Its memorials were few, and within my reach. I read the scanty Hebraic literature of those days. I studied the graphic pages of that fine old reprobate, Josephus, until it almost seemed as if his pages had never been studied before. I began to know something about the Hebrew people—their struggles and vicissitudes, the changes of their language, the swift glories of their heroic age, their sects, their politics, their modes of thought and ways of life—from the time when Daniel was chief of the Wise Men of the East and the Far-East, until, in the year of grace, Christ Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea.

Then, as the first step toward making the days of the disciples life-like, I made out lists of the names of all the men and women in each one of the four Gospels, thinking to bring together all that was said of them in each, and in all, of the Gospels. The names were somewhat different in each of the lists;

and, running them over, and recalling what I could remember of the men and women named in each, the thought came into my mind that in the earliest Gospel there was a designed *secrecy* and *silence* as to certain persons and events. I quickly took in the points of the case, and was soon assured that this was the true conclusion.

I saw the bearings of this discovery upon the criticism of St. Matthew's Gospel. In the style of that Gospel, artless and unstudied though it be, the characteristics of *the same mind* are every-where to be seen. As no one else would have written any line just as Tacitus did, so St. Matthew wrote no paragraph of his Gospel just as any one else would have written it. Every-where the organic life of his Gospel is felt, and the bristling titles and closely printed tomes of those who, like Ewald, have denied its unity have not proved to me the critical sagacity of any of them. I see their arguments, and I see through them. Yet I see, as clearly as any of those theorists can, that St. Matthew's Gospel has at one or two points a fragmentary look. Were this inexplicable it would be nothing against the fact that his Gospel is the product of one mind. But I think I can show that it is St. Matthew's *caution* as to certain persons and events that gives this appearance to his Gospel at those points. I am now to prove this caution; and, by the same evidence, to prove that St. Matthew's Gospel was written as early as the time of the persecution that began with the murder of St. Stephen.

FOR at least seven years after the veil of the Temple was rent in twain the Christians were, in outward form, a sect of the Jews. They continued daily in the Temple, their women were purified, their first-born sons were redeemed.

Sects were not unknown among the children of Abraham; and it was the underlying thought of Gamaliel's argument—a noble example of the eloquence of the Sanhedrim—that an everlasting religion had nothing to fear from a sect that would endure but for a time. His idea was much the same as that of the Jews of the present day, with whom Christianity is a Hebrew aberration, whose long-enduring course is running out. Gamaliel's policy then seemed possible and politic. As the Jews did concede that John the Baptist was a Prophet, they could concede that Jesus was a Prophet; and, though His dream of a spiritual religion had touched the imperishable Temple, yet the vitality of His error died with Him. The Jews could tolerate a heresy whose consequences were so little foreknown, even by those who held it. The most far-sighted could see no danger to religion from sectarians held together by insane devotion to a malefactor, who had openly perished in the sight of all the people.

On the other hand, those whom we have to call Christians—a little in advance of the time when they were known by that name—believed that Jesus was the Christ who would soon come again. But their hope in his coming was Hebraic. They looked for him to be King of the race because he was to be King of the Jews. "Out of Zion was to

go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The significance of the Sacrifice, that made needless the symbolism of the temple-worship, was not well understood. Jesus said that He came not to destroy, but to fulfill the law, and those words seemed in harmony with the hopes they cherished. Thus there seemed to be no need of a fatal breach between the old and the new, and, for a time, there was a truce between the Jews and the Christians. The as yet nameless sect provoked little curiosity and less fear.

The citizens of Jerusalem knew less of Jesus than we are apt to think. His person was hardly known to them. His comings had been few, His tarryings brief, and when the city was thronged with strangers. At His last visit they cried, "Who is this?" Those who answered, "Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth in Galilee," were Galileans.

Deep the mark of his words on the souls of a few, and the city shuddered at his crucifixion. All heard of his resurrection, a few thousands believed it; but the city beheld Jesus no more. Feasts and passovers went on. Millions of strangers came and went away. A metropolis sees much and forgets much. After the death of Jesus, as after his birth, the few remembered, the many forgot, the signs and wonders.

Seven years after the crucifixion Jewish indifference changed to open hostility. St. Stephen was charged with saying that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy the Temple and change the Law. His defense tacitly admits that the charge was sub-

stantially true. He made a historical argument to prove that the Hebrew religion did not belong to a family, a tribe, or a people, but to all the world. Some of his judges had heard it before, for they would not suffer his argument to go on. St. Stephen felt it was useless to plead, and he turned upon his enemies with invectives that hastened, but did not cause, his murder. His taking off had been planned before; and not without good reason in the eyes of his judges, for St. Stephen took the same ground as to the ritual of Moses that was afterward taken by St. Paul. He taught that Jesus was instead of the holy Temple. He reaffirmed that for which Jesus had been tried, condemned, and punished. In this St. Stephen was not alone. His judges knew that he had a following. It was clear to the Jews that the crucifixion had not put an end to the Nazarene. The delusion was growing, not dying out. The Nazarene was becoming a power in the land, and something had to be done.

The Jews were too weak and they were too sagacious to strike at the witnesses to the Resurrection. That was neither possible nor politic. No law made it a crime to have seen Jesus, who had died, alive again; and the number of the men and women who had seen him was both too few and too many. The risen Lord had not shown himself openly. The witnesses to his resurrection were a small company, and yet the five hundred who saw him at one time were too many to be made way with. The trial and the condemnation of two or three of the common people would avail nothing; it would

neither destroy the witness of the others nor their own. Dying enthusiasts adhere to their convictions, and their testimony, sealed with their blood, is more convincing than ever. The Sanhedrim had not the legal right to put any one to death; and it was far from safe to do it by a public tumult, or a private execution. It was wiser to treat the witness to Christ as fraudulent, or as the delusion of a few enthusiasts.

Such would have been their shrewdest conclusion had their power to punish been as great as they wished. They had to go further back than the witness to the Resurrection. They had again to stamp down the pretense that Jesus was the Son of God, for His Resurrection was an almost irresistible inference from his Divine humanity, and a little evidence would prove what was antecedently so credible.

Those strong men preferred strong measures. They determined to punish some of those who, by colluding with Jesus when alive, had made themselves liable to indictment for having aided and abetted in the crime of blasphemy. Of course the Jews tried to keep their design a secret, and it did not become public through its success. St. Luke says nothing of it, but his sketch of the persecution that began with the arrest of St. Stephen accords with such a design. The record may seem to be meager and insufficient; but as a few pencil marks from the hand of a master, so there, a few lines tell a great deal. They may even suggest more than was known to St. Luke, just as a portrait may

have in it more of a man's history than the artist knew.

That persecution was not one of those casual outbreaks that are common in passionate Oriental cities of divers races and religions. It began in a session of the Council. The judges of St. Stephen were his executioners, and Saul, who was conspicuous at the martyrdom, was a pupil of Gamaliel. How long the persecution lasted is unknown; but for a time, certainly, there was no intent to let the heretics go, and it lasted long enough to fill the prisons. Men, women, and children could not readily escape from that walled and guarded town; and in hiding they waited to dispose of their effects, for their sick to get well, for a safe chance of flight; and months may have passed before the Jews changed their purpose and drove all the heretics out of the city.

On looking into the record of this persecution we are struck with some things that are peculiar. Though every house was broken into, yet not one of the Twelve was arrested; though a multitude were dragged to prison, both men and women, not one of them was tried. Such is the impresssion St. Luke gives, and his narrative at least makes it certain that there was no public trial or execution of any person of such note, that he felt called upon to speak of it. But it can hardly have been that in such an outbreak of rage and zeal there was no bloodshed. This idea harmonizes the history in St. Luke with the frequent allusions to those days in St. Paul's speeches and letters. St. Paul says

that he voted (in the minority, perhaps) that heretics should be put to death, that he tried to make them blaspheme, (whether any of them did so may be doubted,) and that *he persecuted them unto death.* Possibly these last words refer to his intent, or to the death of Stephen; but the punishment of scourging in the synagogues was permitted by the Romans, and, at such a time, it is likely to have been inflicted with such a cruel disregard of the usual merciful restrictions, that, in some cases, death may have ensued. And due regard being had to the way that St. Paul is speaking, if even one aged or infirm person was tortured to death, it might answer to his words. They point to horrors that harrowed up his soul as they stood up in the accusing past, yet were not of sufficient consequence to be noted by the historian.

The mission of Saul to Damascus falls in exactly with our general view. Not till Jerusalem and its suburbs had been thoroughly searched could there have been any thought of searching elsewhere. But when that was unsuccessful the question arose, Where can those whom they wished to seize have gone? There was an idea that they might have fled to Damascus, and pursuers, armed with a mandate from the high-priest, started for that city. They were in great earnest, for the distance was considerable and they set out on an uncertainty. This is implied in the words, "If they found any of that way." And if they did, what then? Were they to accuse them before the synagogue and there have them punished? No; they were to bring

those whom, perchance, they might find, in bonds to Jerusalem. Why bring them to Jerusalem? There were in Jerusalem heretics enough, some thousands of them, and there were already prisoners enough. The number of those whom they could have brought to Jerusalem in bonds could not have been many. And those whom they could not find in Jerusalem, and hoped to find in Damascus, must have been few in number, and they must have been persons of note.

All is clear and consistent on the supposition that certain persons were sought for; and what St. Luke records might more properly be called an inquisition than a persecution, were it not for the final enforced scattering abroad of the whole Congregation, when the secret purpose of the inquisitors had failed.

For whom were the inquisitors searching? Was it for the Twelve? Within the city itself they all outstayed the persecution, and as no miracle hid them from the eyes of the Jews, we must conclude they were not specially sought for. *For whom*, then, were the inquisitors searching? I think we shall prove that they were searching for the family of Bethany, and for the Blessed Mother of the crucified Son.

Bethany was one of the suburbs of Jerusalem. The miracle there wrought was the immediate occasion of the arrest and trial of Jesus, though the hatred of the Jews had kindled to the heat of murder before the raising of Lazarus, and even the neighborhood of the unholy city had become so

unsafe that Jesus stayed on the eastern bank of the Jordan. While there Mary and her sister Martha sent this message, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick." And, when He would go to Bethany, the thoughtful Thomas said, "Let us go and die with him." These words disprove the notion that most of the disciples were then away from their Master; His time was too near for that; but they do prove not only the chivalry of St. Thomas, but his sagacity. He judged rightly of the peril of the place and time; for, as soon as the chief priests knew that Jesus was again so near, and heard of what He did at Bethany, they took counsel how they might kill Him.

At that time it was their plan to kill Lazarus also. Only St. John records this, and he does not say how Lazarus escaped. But such was the wealth and rank of the family of Bethany that its love for Jesus greatly enraged the rulers of the Jews; and, as Mary foresaw the Lord's death, she may have seen the danger of Lazarus, and the family have had the power to guard against it. Perhaps they did so because of some intimation from their Lord; all we know is, that the Jews then failed to kill Lazarus. But such was their purpose then; and this purpose would naturally revive in the midst of the provocations that led them to murder St. Stephen.

The Mother of Jesus had been his accomplice in the crime of declaring himself the Son of God; a crime for which the Jews said that Jesus had been fairly tried by the law of Moses and justly condemned. In their judgment, she was worthy of

death; and they thought that nothing would so effectually stay the mania about the Son, as the trial and punishment of the Mother.

As such was the intent of the inquisitors, they had to inquire into the lineage and kindred of Jesus, of which the Jews of Jerusalem knew little. Jesus had been called the Son of David, but it might have been in a figurative sense. His kindred were humble people, who had lived in an out-of-the-way mountain village, in a distant corner of the land. It is somewhat probable that even His chosen disciples—save Peter, James, and John—were not well-known, as none of them were arrested. Be that as it may, witnesses had to be hunted up, and from among the heretics. But it was not so easy to find out who the heretics were. Their observance of the sacrament was private, and they kept up the rites of the Hebrew religion. In dress, manners, and looks they were Jews. At an earlier time "they were in favor with the people," "a great company of the priests became obedient to the faith;" little or no concealment of their doctrines, or of themselves, was then thought of. But, in the premonitions of coming danger before a persecution breaks out, frankness gives way to prudence; and the policy of the heretics changed when the people began to be "stirred up against them." Their Master shunned death so long as it could rightly be shunned; and the peril of the time laid on those suspected of being Christians the duty of guarding every act, word, or look that might send a brother or sister to prison.

Suddenly as the persecution may have come at last, it could not have taken the Twelve wholly by surprise. Their Master had forewarned them of evil times, brother delivering up brother to death, and the father the child. He had foretold St. Peter's violent death. Such warnings must have quickened their foresight; and through private means of information, or through their own sagacity, the Disciples, no doubt, foreknew the coming of the persecution, and divined something of its secret purpose.

Their foreknowledge of the troubles, that sooner or later were sure to come, must have deepened their conviction that the oral Gospel would not always suffice for the wants of the Congregation; and we shall prove that within the seven years after the Pentecost, St. Matthew either finished his Gospel, or that, when the persecution came, he did so at once. In seven years there had been time for him to plan and to think over his closely-reasoned and mighty argument. His Master gave him no such intimation of length of days as He did to his brother Evangelist, St. John, and the coming on of the persecution warned him against delay. For safe-keeping, copies of his manuscript had to be sent out of the city. And St. Matthew felt, that when the scattered Congregation went every-where preaching the word, it was not enough for them to carry in their hearts the oral Gospel of the Twelve, but that they ought, also, to have the written apostolic Gospel.

Thus far I have given my conclusions as to the meaning of the persecution in Jerusalem, drawn

from its record in the Acts as compared with the Gospel of St. Matthew. I am now to present the evidence of their correctness, which I find in that Gospel. If some of the facts concerning the history of a new sect were not generally, and some were not known at all, to its enemies, a manuscript reciting its origin would contain very dangerous material at a time when many of the actors in the events it related were in a city where search was made for them, when spies were watching the gates, armed men were breaking into houses and trying all the divers means of detection, using in their turn fraud and force, imprudence, weakness, or treachery, to steal or wrench from their victims the names and hiding-places of other heretics. If such a manuscript were written out before the persecution came, common sense and common prudence would dictate that it should so be altered that it would not imperil any of the brotherhood and sisterhood. So far as possible within the scope of its intent, all that was dangerous would be suppressed. Nothing would be left that needlessly implicated any one. It would bear the marks of having been so written or so altered, that, if an inquisitor tore one of its copies from the bosom of a martyr, or if, by accident or by treachery, one of them fell into his hands, it would not put him on the track of fresh victims.

As many incidents of far-off time are unknown, just what names, places, and events might safely be mentioned in such an ancient manuscript at the time it was written, and just what dangerous facts or hints there must be in it, could not be ascertained

beyond all caviling; and yet, in such a manuscript, indisputable marks of caution would be manifest when they came to be looked for. It might take a microscope to see them all, but some of them would be deep-cut and plain.

On such a manuscript its date would be stamped in more ways than one. And it would set forth some things so guardedly and briefly that other manuscripts, going over the same ground at a later time, might, here and there, seem to contradict it. If its true date, and, consequently, the knowledge of the circumstances in which it was sent forth, were forgotten, its peculiarities in this and in other ways might give rise to perplexity and wonder; and yet successive generations in whom the critical faculty was not awake might read such a manuscript without noting those marks, or at least without thinking they had any special meaning—just as the great bird-tracks on the stones in the valley of the Connecticut, always there and always as plainly visible as now, were passed unseen till our own day; or, if seen, were only wondered at, and, so far from being made to give up their meaning, were not thought to have any meaning.

St. Matthew's Gospel bears marks of having been written at the time of some general persecution; and as the only general persecution of the Christians in Judea was the one which began with the arrest of St. Stephen, it must have been written at that time; or else (which I take to have been the case) changes were then made in the manuscript that fitted it to the circumstances. In St. Mat-

thew's Gospel there are signs of general caution as to all whom its disclosures were likely to endanger, and signs of *special* caution for Lazarus and his sisters and for the Mother of our Lord. This will be proved from what St. Matthew does say and from what he does *not* say—from his handling of some facts, and from his silence as to others. But his silence as to the ministry of our Lord in Judea came from other causes, and will form no part of the argument; nor will his treating so briefly of the Resurrection and his bringing his Gospel to an end without a word concerning the great events that soon followed in Jerusalem. In these things there may be confirmation of our argument, but to separate this out and to measure its force does not seem possible, and the case is strong enough without it.

Herod the king, Herod the Tetrarch of Galilee, Philip his brother, and Herodias, Caiaphas the high-priest, and Pilate the Roman governor, John the Baptist, Joseph, and Mary the Mother of the Lord, are named by St. Matthew. "His brethren" —"James and Joses and Simon and Judas"—and "sisters" of his are spoken of, but the names of the latter are not given. He names the twelve chosen Disciples, also Simon the leper, Simon of Cyrene, Joseph of Arimathea, Mary the mother of James and Joses; and he speaks of the mother of James and John as the mother of Zebedee's children. St. Mark names two others, Jairus the ruler of the synagogue in Capernaum, and Timæus the blind man of Jericho. St. Luke gives the names of the Cæsars, Augustus and Tiberius; of Lysanius the Te-

trach of Abilene, of Cyrenius the Governor of Syria, of Annas the high-priest; also those of Zacharias and Elisabeth his wife, of Simeon and Anna, (four aged persons at the time of Christ's birth, who could not have been living at the time of his Ministry.) He names Simon the Pharisee of Capernaum, Zaccheus of Jericho, Cleopas of Emmaus, Mary and her sister Martha, Susannah, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. He also names Matthias and Justus, who "companied with the disciples all the time from the baptism of John." To the names given in the three earlier Gospels St. John adds those of Nicodemus, of Lazarus, and of Malchus, a servant of the high-priest.

There are not many names in the Evangeliad. Had there been a legendary element in the Gospels there would have been more. For the Magi, tradition invented names; scholars conjecture some of those of the doctors in the Temple, and Claudia Procula, the name of Pilate's wife, seems to be remembered. The Evangelists could have given more names—those of the seventy disciples, for example. They could have given some of those of the court that tried our Lord; but their names have little more of true interest than those of the Roman soldiers who watched the cross or who guarded the tomb. The Evangelists thought more of the characters of men than of their names; and had they given the name of that blind beggar who answered the Jews so well, of the father whose child Christ healed when He came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, or of the two demoniacs, their

pictures would not have been more life-like. The title of the centurion naturally took the place of his name. Of the ten lepers only one returned to give thanks, but even his name is no more to us than the name of the Good Samaritan in the parable. The names of the two false witnesses at the trial are well forgotten. Actions often live in the memory though the names of the actors were unknown. The disciples were moving about, and they may not have heard the names of the young ruler or of the Syrophœnician woman, or, if they did, may soon have forgotten them.

But St. Matthew's avoidance of some events and his keeping back some names is not to be explained on general principles. Throughout his Gospel there is a cautious reticence; and, though it be not certain that caution was the motive for his reserve or silence in each and every instance when it looks very much like it, yet, from all such cases taken together, the inference of caution is certain. He deliberately suppressed names and facts.

The conclusive evidence of this is in the later chapters of St. Matthew, but his handling of events in the Ministry in Galilee suggests the idea of cautious regard for the safety of persons whom his disclosures might endanger. Sometimes he tells what a person did and suppresses the name. Sometimes both name and fact are suppressed. He does not give the name of Jairus, the ruler of his own synagogue, and he says nothing of that nobleman of his own town of Capernaum, who, with all his house, believed. Is there not something here that looks

like caution? He does not mention Joanna, who ministered of her substance to the Lord, and whose home was in the neighboring town of Tiberias. May not this have been from caution? The court of that Herod who murdered the Baptist was at Tiberias, and Chuza, Joanna's husband, was the steward of his household. Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, was in some way distinguished among the blind, who, after the manner of the East, sat in the gates of Jericho begging. St. Mark gives his name. St. Matthew leaves it out. Probably in that there is no significance, but there is significance in St. Matthew's silence as to Zaccheus. As he recalled the days when his Master stayed in Jericho, he could not have forgotten its publican, his eagerness to see the Lord, his climbing up into "the sycamore tree," the honor Christ gave him when He said, "I must abide at thy house." Surely Matthew could not have forgotten the feast the publican gave, so like his own; yet, he left it to St. Luke to record the story and the name of Zaccheus. It is probable that the begging from Pilate, by Joseph of Arimathea, of the body of Jesus, while it yet hung upon the accursed tree, (which is related by St. Matthew,) was too public for caution; and it was safe to give the name of Simon, who was made to bear the cross, for he lived in distant Cyrene. But St. Matthew left it to be made known in a safer time that in the garden and at night Nicodemus embalmed the Crucified. He names two women, mothers of Disciples, and, if they were with their sons whose names are in his list of the Twelve, this may have

had something to do with his naming those women. Zebedee, the husband of one of them, was living when our Lord's ministry began, but seems to have died before it ended. St. Matthew also names Mary Magdalene; and Simon the leper, who had been afflicted with disease, and may have died before St. Matthew wrote.

Our argument yet needs one case where St. Matthew must have known a name, where he was called upon to give that name, and where he suppressed it. There are two such cases; and there is a third that is almost or quite such a case—the name of the man in whose house the Last Supper was instituted. Of the many who come and go in the Gospels, few enkindle more of sacred curiosity. Disciples were sent to meet a man bearing a jar of water. They were to follow the water-carrier home, and there to give this word from the Lord, "My time is at hand. I will eat the Passover at thy house." This message—"My time is at hand"—recognizes, in the master of the house, a spiritual insight such as elsewhere appears but once in the Gospels; and I remark, in passing, that his discipleship is not explained by any thing in the earlier Gospels; yet, strangely as the story there reads, it is in harmony with what the last Gospel alone tells of Christ's teachings and miracles in Jerusalem.

St. Matthew kept back the name of that man so trusted, and so worthy of trust. St. Mark copied his example. His name may not have reached St. Paul, who was not in the "large upper chamber." Yet that name must have become well known to the

Twelve in their sojourn in Jerusalem; and, if St. Matthew wrote his name in his manuscript, he struck it out in that time of common danger, when, perhaps, some of the Twelve were concealed in that man's house.

Those who, in spite of its organic unity, contend that St. Matthew's Gospel was made up of fragmentary sayings, around which a frame-work of events was afterwards constructed, may plead that all the facts cited agree with their patch-work theory. Some of them do; but the strength of our case is in the harmony of so many facts that there can be no reasonable doubt of the conclusion drawn from them collectively; and, though a perfect knowledge of this cumulative evidence might set some of those facts aside, yet that larger knowledge might know of others to fill their places. St. Matthew's caution is quite certain from the evidence already given. But the evidence is not all in. The most decisive part of it is found in two facts, one proving special caution for the family of Bethany and the other for the Mother of our Lord.

This generation, too much in the habit of reading the four Gospels as one continuous history, or, rather, too little in the habit of studying each of the Gospels by itself, was wonder-struck when infidels, searching them one by one and then comparing them, pointed out that the three earlier Evangelists seem to know very little of the family of Bethany, and nothing of Lazarus, whose calling by the Lord from the tomb now stirs the soul like a sound from the archangel's trumpet. Some were so bewildered

that they felt compelled to ascribe to the Gospels a character that vacillates between history and tradition; and the reticence of St. Matthew as to that family, continued as it is by St. Mark and St. Luke, is indeed strange. Our Lord's affection for that family was well known to his Disciples, and nothing he ever did was better known in Jerusalem, and in all the region round about, than the raising of Lazarus; yet in St. Matthew's Gospel only one cold line alludes to the blessed home of Mary and her sister Martha: "He went out to Bethany and lodged there." St. Mark barely names Bethany, and says nothing of the family. St. Luke does not locate the home of Martha and Mary: with him it is "a certain village;" and he does not say they were sisters of Lazarus. Like St. Matthew and like St. Mark, St. Luke does not name Lazarus at all.

The danger which surrounded that family was the reason for this silence. St. Matthew suppressed the names of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, because the hatred of the Jews was such that no word could then be written of them, that, by any evil chance, might make their lives less secure. It may be that nothing could have made that hatred more intense or their danger greater; yet St. Matthew did as any careful man would have done. Written with quickening pulses of his heart, his brief, cold line was designedly brief and cold. Well he loved that family, and well he knew the worth of their history; but he knew as well it would not be lost, for his colleague, St. John, would record it in a later and safer time. The silence of St. Mark

is to be explained in the same way; or he may have felt that he ought to take the same course that the Apostle had taken. In St. Luke's sketch of Mary and Martha a touch of contrast identifies their likenesses with their full portraits from the pencil of St. John; but St. Luke tells so little of them, and that little is comparatively so unimportant, that it looks as if St. Luke felt that he ought to show that the sisters were known to him, and had some reason for not saying more.

The Christians in Judea were never safe, and a continuing deadly purpose of the Jews toward the family of Bethany would explain the continuance, through the second and third Gospel, of the silence of the first Gospel about them. There is a similar caution concerning the Blessed Mother in the first Gospel, that continues in the second, and ceases in the third, doubtless because the reason for it had ceased with her death.

St. Matthew's withholding the name of the man in whose "upper chamber" our Lord kept the Passover, is good evidence of caution; his withholding another name is *decisive* evidence of it. It stamps upon his Gospel one mark of caution as to the family of Bethany that cannot be disputed. Our Lord himself commanded that a certain act of a woman of that family should be told forever as a memorial of her. And though it break in upon the continuity of our argument, let us pause, for here something may be learned of Christ, as a man, not elsewhere to be learned so well. At a feast in the house of Simon of Bethany, Mary, the sister of

Lazarus, moved by the prophetic intuition of faith and love, anointed the body of Jesus, his hands and his feet, for burial. With an insight into the Scriptures far beyond that of the disciples, she knew that the Lamb of God would atone by suffering unto death for the sins of his people. Her sister Martha had the same high order of intellect. Jesus said unto her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Then—as if what the Christ had said was implied in what she was saying—Martha answered, "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

Mary knew, what that Man of the house knew and the disciples did not know, that the time of the Master was at hand. The uncomprehending Disciples looked coldly on her anointing of Jesus as one who was dead; but He who alone understands, who alone appreciates any one, understood and approved. He felt that she appreciated his suffering that was to come, as though that suffering were in the past. Appreciation is as needful and grateful to the human soul as love, and is perhaps more rare. Our Lord had so little of appreciation that the loneliness of his life on earth passes all imagining. His Disciples at last proved themselves worthy of his trust; but then their faith was dark in the clear light of that woman's. She felt the shadow of fast-coming death that was falling on her Lord. She knew his human solicitude that his

poor remains should be decently cared for, and from what he then said we know that he shared in that human feeling which dimly preintimates that the body will come again from the dust,—as in some far distant cycle it will, when Christ shall destroy the "last enemy," and, by the redemption of the body as well as of the soul, give divine completeness to His victory over death. That real human feeling belongs to all born of the Woman who heard the inexorable decree and the mysterious promise, that one of woman born would redeem from death; and our Lord's solicitude for his remains proves his real human nature. But how could Mary have known that feeling? She may have known it from the Scriptures, for there God, as if touched by this solicitude of his Son, ordains that his grave shall be with the rich in his death:—a decree that came to pass when his body was laid in that "new tomb in the rock, wherein never man was laid."

How that wonderful woman knew that feeling of her Lord, or how her anointing of his living body had such significance, I do not fully comprehend, but she knew that his executioners would keep her away from him when he died. She was in sympathy with her Lord, and she heard his commendation: "She hath done what she could. She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. She hath wrought a good work upon me. Why trouble ye the woman?" This He said because the disciples "had indignation" when they saw "the waste" of that "costly offering." Judas murmured that "it might have been sold for more than three

hundred pence and given to the poor;" as though there were only one poverty; as though, in the lack of all that makes the wear of life easier, in the want of honor and of love, Jesus was not poorer than the poor. Judas, troubled for the poor, went out and sold his Master! Jesus knew why Judas went, and yet he then foretold that his Gospel should be preached in all the world.

But it is not his divine foresight, so often shown elsewhere, it is his human gratitude, that he rarely had occasion to show, that here claims our thoughts. The spirit in which he said, "He that shall give a cup of cold water to a disciple of mine, for my sake, shall in no wise lose his reward," here breaks forth as nowhere else in all his life. His affluence of gratitude shows his heart as a man, and his boundless reward is befitting him to whom all time, all space belonged. "Wheresoever this Gospel"—the Gospel, known to Mary, that his death would save his people—"wheresoever *this Gospel* shall be preached, in the whole world, there shall also this, which this woman hath done, *be told as a memorial of her.*"

With that command we resume our argument. In the act of obeying that command St. Matthew disobeyed it; he told what that woman did, and kept back her name. It is evasive to say, that her intelligence, her sympathy, her faith, her love, were to be remembered; that it is immaterial who she was, what name she bore. The command is plain, what that woman did shall be told *as a memorial of her;* and St. Matthew, when telling what he felt

he must and did tell, must have had strong reasons for keeping back her name.

It is folly here to allow the thought of fragmentary tradition; for, with pious zeal, tradition would have invented a hundred names for that woman, rather than have had her story go forth in this unsatisfactory way. Her name would have been seen in the clouds, whistled in the winds, whispered of angels! There is the soberness of history in St. Matthew's silence; and what can have been his reason save the caution which is shown throughout his Gospel, and is here specially manifest toward the family of Bethany?

St. Matthew twice points as straight to that family as prudence permitted. Once, when all but intimating that it was the custom of Jesus, he says, He went out to Bethany and lodged there; once, when he locates what he told of that unnamed woman in the house of Simon of Bethany. This makes against my argument; still, he may have felt constrained to say something that would tend to identify that woman in a better time; and it is *caution* that is here to be proved, not its metes and bounds.

That St. Matthew, having said all that he could consistently with that woman's safety, left what he could not say to his colleague St. John, is curiously confirmed by the way that St. John brings in her name. St. Mark had told the story, and, like St. Matthew, had suppressed the name. St. John repeats the story twice told before, and, as if quick to supply the omissions of his brother Evangelists and

do what they expected, he gives her name the first possible chance, before he tells her story in its proper place farther on. And it looks very much as if he had in mind St. Luke's unnamed "village" when he writes thus: "Now a certain man was sick named Lazarus of *Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.*" Then he at once goes on to say: "*It was that Mary* which anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick." St. John's ready way of referring, beforehand, to the story of Mary, also shows that the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark were well known to his readers; and he could safely name Mary and Martha and Lazarus, for he had long outlived them all.

The caution of St. Matthew for the safety of the Blessed Mother remains to be proved. This led to a peculiar presentation of some facts and an omission of others, that give to his Gospel, at certain points, a fragmentary appearance which heretofore has baffled the critical sagacity that has tried to explain it. The reason for these enigmas is St. Matthew's caution, which also vindicates his Gospel from any seeming want of honor for her "whom all nations are to call blessed."

Concerning the Blessed Mother there is a mysterious reserve and silence in the two earlier Gospels. We are astonished at the absence of so much of the glory and grace that shine around her in the third Gospel. It is true, that St. Matthew marks that her faith led to the worship of her divine Son by the pilgrims from the Far-East, and this, with

what he records in his first chapter, is enough to show, that, in honoring her, the first Gospel is in harmony with the third; and still, its mysterious reserve and silence remain.

This lessens not the perfection of the written Gospel, for all the Gospels were to be together, and the congregation was to form its idea of the holy Virgin from them all; and yet this does not explain the reserve of the earliest Gospel. It refers to her but four times: once when the angel told St. Joseph that the child of the Virgin would save His people from their sins; once, when at Bethlehem the Magi worshiped the Child; once, in the ministry of Jesus, when she stands outside of the circle around her Son; and once, as living among the Nazarenes. The two last allusions show that she was living at the time of the ministry of her Son; but that may have been well known to the Jews, and St. Matthew may have thought that it should be known to all, that more ready credence might be given to revelations of hers that would be made at a later time.

St. Mark's Gospel has only those two later allusions; and it is startling to find that her name could not be known from his Gospel were it not for the taunt of the Nazarenes, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" In the third Gospel there is a great change. The reserve of St. Matthew and St. Mark is there ended by an evangel that came from the Blessed Mother herself. In the last Gospel she is at the marriage-feast, where her faith led to the first miracle, and she is near the cross, when our

dying Lord intrusted her to the care of his beloved Disciple.

It seems unreal that any wrong could have come near the Mother of the Lord; yet so full of evil was the time that she must have been in danger from the wrath of man so long as she lived. The Satanic purpose to crucify her Son did enter into the souls of wicked men; and, though it seems too wicked to think of, yet, when their hatred of Christ broke out anew in the murder of St. Stephen, the course of events in that persecution and the caution as to any thing that might, by any chance, endanger her safety, point to a purpose of the Jews to find the Mother of Jesus, to try her on the charge of blasphemously conspiring with her Son, and, as they murdered Him, to murder her through the violated forms of law, and thus to put an end to heresy.

For all St. Matthew's caution, strange as it may seem, there was, then, as strange a reason. This caution agrees with his seemingly casual allusion to the birth of Jesus in the first verse of his second chapter; this caution opens the way for an explanation of the seeming variance between him and St. Luke as to the home of the holy family, and also of his proving the Messianic ancestry of Jesus through St. Joseph's genealogy; but such are the intricacies of those questions, and they involve so much that belongs to them only, that their answers must be put off until our next chapter. And, though still leaving some further evidence of it to come out in the discussion of those questions, we here finish our argument with one decisive fact.

As at the close of our proof of St. Matthew's caution for the family of Bethany, so here, at the close of our proof of his caution for the Blessed Mother, one fact clinches the case. With the Disciple whom Jesus loved She stood near the cross; Jesus said to his Mother, "Woman, behold thy son;" and, from that hour, that Disciple took her unto his own home. This must have been well known to all the Twelve, to St. Matthew with the rest, and his not speaking of it is proof, *not of silence merely, but of secrecy*. This is clear on comparing his Gospel with that of St. John. "Many women," who followed Jesus from Galilee, beheld the crucifixion. When St. Matthew speaks of them they were gazing afar off. Some of them afterward separated from the others; for St. John speaks of some women as near the cross, and evidently he speaks of a group that came from the company of "many women," spoken of by St. Matthew; for each Evangelist singles out some of the most noteworthy of those women, and the name of Mary Magdalene is in both lists. Now, from the names so honored, St. Matthew leaves out that of the Blessed Mother, yet he must have known that she was one of the company of women whose presence he commemorates, and three of whom he names. He was silent as to her being there, because he wrote with due regard to her safety, when persecution, raging against those who believed in the divine Son, raged most fiercely against the Blessed Mother, who was then, no doubt, with St. John in Jerusalem.

When our Lord, thoughtful, in death, for His

Mother, intrusted her to the care of St. John, He may have foreseen that the Jews would seek to compass her death as they had His own, and that she would be safer away from her kindred. This is possible, though we would not weaken our argument by laying stress upon it. But, surely, in that evil time, the Twelve were always solicitous for her safety. And when persecution was drawing nigh, and St. Matthew saw the need of prudence, his care for her, naturally and inevitably, gave a peculiar turn to what he wrote. Some things, that he could not omit, he wrote in a peculiar way, and he was silent as to others, of which, in other circumstances, he would have spoken. Thus passes away all semblance of any difference in their tone between the first two Gospels and the third, when speaking of the Blessed Mother—a semblance more painful to thoughtful souls than the semblance of any historical differences.

In conclusion, one statement sums up the case. Had there been a trial of the Blessed Mother on the charge of being the accomplice of her Son in the crime of blasphemy, and had St. Matthew's Gospel been produced on that trial, no evidence could have been found in it to sustain that indictment. So far as could be known from his Gospel, She was away from the place of crucifixion. In it She is never openly engaged in aiding in his ministry. The Gospel is full of proof that Christ Jesus was the Son of God, but its direct testimony of this is his own affirmation on his trial, the witness from heaven, and the words of the angel to St. Joseph.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE thus proves the date of St. Matthew's Gospel; and yet, in that Gospel, a time-mark is twice repeated that *seems* to disprove that evidence. With the thirty pieces of silver the priests bought the potter's field—"Wherefore that field was called the field of blood, *unto this day*." Again: they bribed the Roman watch set over the sepulcher, to say, "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. . . . And this saying is commonly reported among the Jews *until this day*." The words, "*until this day*," were written later than the martyrdom of St. Stephen. But there is a limit to the time in the fall of Jerusalem, some thirty-seven years after the crucifixion. It might have been written at the end of those years or of half of them,* for time seems longer or shorter in proportion to its events, and those years were years of change.

Writing as early as the seventh year after the crucifixion, and primarily for Jews of Palestine, St. Matthew wrote, as St. Paul spoke to them, in their native tongue. But when the world became the

* I quote this from a Review of a book on "The Second French Empire" in one of our journals, as apt confirmation of what is said above:—"When we contrast the condition of Europe of to-day—the unity of Italy, the rise of the German Empire, the passive and pacific position of the French Republic—with the dreams and hopes and aims and schemes of the Bonaparte dynasty *seventeen years ago*, we can hardly help feeling as if we were reading a history of the Middle Ages. Every thing seems so changed. *It all seems so long ago*."

For the same reason this sentence is quoted from another writer:—"I am about to speak of Ireland as it was some *four and twenty years ago*, and feel as if I were referring to *a long past period of history*, such have been the changes, political and social, effected in that interval."

field of Christianity, there was urgent reason why St. Matthew should turn his Hebrew Gospel into Greek—as he could in a few days. His Hebrew Gospel, if rendered into Greek, could be read in Palestine, and be read every-where.

Scholars are well agreed that our Greek Gospel of St. Matthew is not a translation. In the second century the Syriac version was made from it, and the Syriac language is so like the later Hebrew that the Syriac translators would have followed St. Matthew's Hebrew text, had they not been sure that he also wrote the Greek text they translated. A translation would never have been received as of the same authority with an original Gospel had it not been accredited by something so remarkable as to be well remembered. If our Gospel of St. Matthew were a translation it would be known who made it, and the place, time, and circumstances; but even tradition does not claim to know any of these things.

Such were the circumstances in which the few copies of St. Matthew's Hebrew Gospel were sent forth, and such the calamities that bereft Palestine of its Jewish inhabitants, that it is not strange that its few copies early disappeared. Only Palestinian Jews could read it, and, even with them, when away from Palestine, St. Matthew's Greek Gospel took its place.

Confusion and uncertainty would have followed, had St. Matthew altered his Gospel when he turned it into Greek, and there is no probability that he ever thought of it. Still he might have naturally

inserted the words, "until this day," when speaking of the Potter's Field, and of the story told by the Jews. That story touched him deeply, for he relates the facts with a fullness unlike his usual brevity; and the space he gives them seems almost too great when we think of other things which he might have given in their stead. To St. Matthew it was an old story then, for in thought and feeling he was even then far from the time when his Master's body lay in the tomb; yet when, some years later, he turned his Hebrew Gospel into Greek, the Jews were still circulating the old calumny which he exposed seven years after its fabrication. And if, as we may easily imagine, something brought this sharply home to him as he was writing, he may then, in wonder and in sorrow, have said that little; and it was like St. Matthew to say no more.

Our conclusion, then, is this: After St. Matthew wrote his Gospel in his native tongue he turned that Hebrew Gospel into that Greek dialect which his brethren used in their writings, and those words which we have considered merely show that this was done some years after he wrote the Gospel in the Hebrew tongue.

CHAPTER III.

THE GENEALOGY IN ST. MATTHEW.

THE discovery verified in the last chapter throws some light upon St. Matthew's proving the Messianic ancestry of Jesus by the genealogy of Joseph, and upon alleged variances between St. Luke and the first two chapters of St. Matthew. Heretofore, their defense has hardly gone beyond saying that St. Luke does not absolutely contradict any thing that is said in them, yet no two chapters in the holy Gospels are denied with more strength of conviction. Some critics say they are made up of three disconnected fragments; that, by its own showing, the genealogy has nothing to do with Jesus, and was stupidly prefixed to the second fragment. They say the last fragment (the second chapter) is a jumble of astrology and fable; and Norton, one of the most judicious of such critics, threw those two chapters aside, and began his translation of the Gospels with the third chapter of St. Matthew.

Elsewhere I have defended the second chapter of St. Matthew by explaining it; and I am now to try to do the like with his use of the genealogy of St. Joseph. The New Testament is the completion of the Old. The Old Testament foretold that

the Messiah would be the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, and the first apostolic record of Christ Jesus could not pass over his Messianic lineage; nor could St. Matthew have left this out unless he changed the whole plan of his Gospel. For it was one of his purposes to prove that the prophets of God so prophesied of the Son of God that the old revelation was fulfilled in the new. It was not so with the second Gospel. St. Mark says nothing of the Messianic ancestry of Jesus, and little of Messianic prophecy, but St. Mark wrote after St. Matthew, and there is no presumption, from his silence, that each was not an indispensable part of the earliest-written Gospel; for St. Mark's Gospel was not to go forth independently of St. Matthew's, and the two Gospels made the circuit of the world together.

Josephus, who was a man grown when St. Matthew was an old man, says that "he set down his genealogy as he found it in the public records," and St. Matthew offers such a table. In courts of law a family record is evidence of descent, and the table offered by St. Matthew combines the weight of a family record and a public record. He gives the proper evidence in good legal form.

A genealogical table, reaching through many generations, would be likely to have some inaccuracies; but if they do not touch the points to be proved, nor raise any suspicion of fraud, they rather strengthen its evidence by showing it to be an honest old record, and not one gotten up for the occasion. Such inaccuracies, if such there be, would

not make against the inspiration of St. Matthew's Gospel. His inspiration vouches only that "the Book of the Generation of Jesus" proves his descent from David and Abraham. Thus far his inspired witness to its accuracy goes, and there was no need that it should go any farther. He had to quote the table as he found it; if there were any such inaccuracies, and he had corrected them, he would have tampered with the evidence.

Still he might, perhaps, have made some changes not meant to give it any weight that did not belong to it as an old, legal, Jewish genealogy—changes that did not vitally affect its evidence—and it looks as if he did. For surely in such documents it was not usual to give the names of women; yet the Evangelist names Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth, and speaks of her that had been the wife of Urias. Thus he marks, that Jesus, though of blessed and kingly ancestry, was associated in his lineage, as in his life, with sinners; and though Ruth be of pure and gentle memory, yet she was of the Moabites, whom an old law shut out of the congregation of Israel. So that even into that dry genealogical catalogue of names the Evangelist interweaves intimations that the mercy in Christ will reach to sinners and to Gentiles. This St. Matthew did in the same spirit in which he told of the coming and worship of the Magi, and these "disconnected fragments" bear the impress of the same heart and the same mind.

In his seventeenth verse he points out three periods in the table, each ending with a person or

an event easily remembered, and he may have had in mind that his manuscript would sometimes be committed to memory. But, surely, this cannot be the exhaustive reason for the verse; it is a superficial and unsatisfactory reason for a word of inspiration. According to the Evangelist, the time-cycles of the Hebrews (and if so, the time-cycles of the world) had relations to the coming of the Lord. He points out that the life of the Hebrews unrolled in three time-harmonies, one ending in triumph, one in mourning; and thus may intimate that in the end of the third the notes of the two former blend. This remarkable verse, then, may reveal that as the visible world was framed in harmony with numbers, so the world's life unrolls in harmony with time-laws; and it may be the germ of a science yet to try the powers of man, quickened by mysterious sayings of the Sacred Oracles, to divine time-laws yet unknown. But the verse gives little help in discerning those laws beyond disclosing their existence, for some generations are stricken out of the table, manifestly for their sins. In the thought of God those unnumbered generations seem, in some respects, to have become as if they had never been. And so, for this world at least, those truths whose existence this difficult verse intimates, would hardly seem to pertain to the thoughts of man, but only to the thought of GOD "whose glory it is to conceal a thing."

St. Matthew proves the ancestry of Jesus by that of Joseph, and, until we understand how his evidence applies, it seems not only to be irrelevant,

but to make what he relates self-contradictory. For he reveals that Jesus was born of the holy Virgin. How, then, can Joseph's genealogy have any thing to do with Jesus? And why did not St. Matthew prove his Davidian lineage through his Mother?

Some answer these questions by saying that Jesus was the adopted son of Joseph! And skeptics say that the placing the genealogy where it is, is evidence that St. Matthew's Gospel is a hap-hazard of traditions. Yet, as usual, they refute themselves; for, if what they say be true, an idiot put the genealogy where it is. And it can be shown that the genealogy of Joseph is evidence of the lineage of the Child of the holy Virgin.

Much archæologic and historic knowledge concerning the Hebrews has perished. Much was buried in the deluge of their calamities. Christianity went forth out of Judea, dwelt in other lands, spoke new languages, was busy with new duties, and forgot somewhat of the Hebrew past from which she was so widely separated. It is providential that so much biblical knowledge of Jewish origin yet throws light upon the writings of the Evangelists. In each generation something is added to our knowledge of their meaning. New searching for lost treasure finds some treasure overlooked before: a manuscript in the monastery of some far-off promontory or sacred mountain, or among some decivilized sect; a sentence in some half-forgotten scribe, a name on a crumbling arch, a picture in a tomb, or a custom kept up by the children of the desert. The ocean rolls pieces of the wreck on shore, a leaf floats to

the strand, a coin is washed up by the waves. Each year something is given up by the sea.

There is another way in which that knowledge slowly and surely increases. Many minds turn to a truth whose defense and illustration require the discovery of some lost truth. The search from what is but a *seeming* truth to an unknown truth is apt to lead from error to error without end; but the search from a known truth to an unknown truth is a hopeful search. The one truth is the complement of the other. The known truth hints of the unknown truth, and there are nice fittings in of the one to the other that are never seen till the two are brought together. When a false discovery is made, however satisfactory it may be for a time, it will not continue satisfactory; but whenever a true discovery is made it will more and more approve itself to be a true discovery. When the right conjecture hits upon the truth unthought of coincidences and relations with other truths then disclose themselves, and some historic evidence, before unnoted, is often seen to confirm it. A cheering book might be compiled of archæological, historical, and critical conjectures concerning difficult verses of Scripture, and of theological conjectures as well, that, for a time, *seemed* to have some life in them, but at length were buried out of sight and forgotten, while at last came the right conjecture with the vitality of truth, and lived on. Half truths—there are many such—sometimes hinder the way of the truth, sometimes help toward it. Oftentimes a slight touch frees some of these half-truths from the quality of error, and some,

by gaining that which they lacked, become whole truths. Thus the interpretation of holy Scripture grows more perfect; and we cannot foreknow how much may yet be added to sacred knowledge of historical or critical truth, nor tell how much of moral and spiritual truth may yet brighten from out of the unimaginable depths of the brightness of God's holy word.

St. Matthew thought the genealogy of Joseph, in connection with some other facts, was fitting evidence of the Messianic ancestry of Christ Jesus, and, whatever the difficulty of understanding his method of proof to us, who are so far from the old Oriental and Hebrew world, he puts it forward so readily that in his time there could have been no difficulty about it.

His genealogical document runs straight down from Abraham to Joseph, and there ends without naming Jesus. This document, though incorporated into, and becoming part of, an historical statement which avers that Jesus was no son of Joseph, is said to be "The Book of the Generation of Jesus." Here, then, its genealogical value must be unique, and its superscription, heading, or title, "The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham," is of special significance.

The document is the book of the generation of Joseph. In and of itself, it is nothing else. So much is clear on its face. But its superscription alters its character so that, while originally it was "The Book of the Generation of Joseph," it somehow becomes, in its place here, according to its heading or title,

"The Book of the Generation of *Jesus*," and here it proves that one of the two persons named in its heading was the national, and the other was the family, ancestor of Jesus. The question then is, *How can the genealogy of Joseph prove these facts concerning Jesus?* This we are to learn from *these four statements* which St. Matthew puts, side by side, on the same page: That Jesus was of the line of David, that He was the child of the Virgin, that Joseph was betrothed to the Virgin, and that Joseph was of the line of David. To St. Matthew the last three of those facts, as by him connected, were satisfactory evidence of the first—that Jesus was of David's line; and he left that as proved.

Now, it is clear from what he says, that the descent of Jesus from David cannot have been through Joseph. It can only have been through the blessed Virgin. And St. Matthew's proof, by the genealogy of Joseph, that Jesus was of David's line, evidently turns on the betrothment and marriage of the holy Virgin to a prince of the house of David. What, then, we further seek to know is this: How does the marriage of Mary with a descendant of David prove Mary herself to be a descendant of David?

The royal house of David never could have ceased to be of interest to the Jews. They had become very humble, but could not have been forgotten. It is said that at a later time search was made, by order of the Emperor Domitian, for some of them, and they were found in so low an estate that they were left unharmed. And such being their condition, that it had become the custom of the family of the

great king to marry only among themselves, and that this was known to the Jews, are hardly less than certain. Royal blood intermarries with royal blood. When Victoria was betrothed to Albert every one knew that Albert was a prince, and every one would know that the betrothed of a Czarovitch or of a Prince of Wales was a princess. The family of King David, obscure people for centuries, must have married below their rank, or have intermarried among themselves. That they did the latter is so probable, from the tendency of Jewish families to keep together and from the usage of royal families, that it may be held for certain that when St. Matthew stated that Joseph, a prince of the house of David, married Mary, he plainly told his countrymen (and, if he thought of others, he thought that through them all would know) that the betrothed of this prince was a princess of the house of David.

The Evangelist was not called upon to mention the Davidian lineage of Joseph for its own sake. If that fact had relation to Joseph only, to have mentioned it would hardly have been in keeping with the simplicity of a Gospel. The Evangelist was called upon to mark the Davidian lineage of the holy Virgin. In his Gospel the fact was a vital one; but if it be not implied in what he says of her husband, he did not mention it. Nay more, it is hardly too much to say, that unless he thought that the *marriage* of the Virgin proved that she also was of the royal family, by pointedly naming only the Davidian lineage of Joseph he denied that of the Virgin.

The millions of the tribe of Sheikh Abraham kept

the tradition of its blood with a fidelity beyond even that of the unchanging memory of the desert. It expanded a unique and wonderful system of genealogical notation, by means of which every one of that race could trace the lines of life, that met in himself, back to where they began in the common ancestor. In such a system there may have been usages that helped to make St. Matthew's use of the genealogy of Joseph very plain to Jews. Certainly there seems to have been one such usage; for the Mosaic code provided that "every daughter that possessed any inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel should be wife unto the family of the tribe of her father." The mode of proving the flowing down of the blood of the ancestor was immaterial, and as genealogies of women were little in use, it is probable that the lineage of such women was proved by that of the man they married. The Jews, then, were familiar with a class of women in which the wife had the same ancestor with her husband, and when St. Matthew proved the descent of the Child of the Virgin by the genealogy of the man she married, no doubt he proved this in a not uncommon fashion. And though, in this case, there was a limitation within a tribe, the Jews would understand this more specific limitation from the well-known usage of those of royal blood to intermarry with those of royal blood, and from the custom of the house of David.

To all this St. Matthew may fairly be regarded as a witness. To illustrate this, let it be supposed that the lost historical books of Justus of Tiberias,

a contemporary of St. Matthew, had been preserved, and that in them it was said that the son of a widow was of the blood of Mattathias of Modin, the founder of the royal Asmonean house; that the widowed mother of that boy married Simon; and that, to prove this Mattathias was the family ancestor of her son, Justus brought forward "The Book of the Generation of Simon," and proved that Simon was of the heroic, kingly line of the Maccabees. The use of such a mode of proof by a Jewish historian would make it clear that it was the well-known usage of the Asmoneans to intermarry only with their own family, and that the descent of the Asmonean women from Mattathias was proved by the genealogies of their husbands. Justin's method would be evidence of this, and, with our imperfect knowledge of Hebrew archæology, would be held to prove it in secular history. St. Matthew's mode of proving the lineage of Jesus should be treated in the same way. It is evidence offered by a Hebrew who evidently proceeds according to usage well established and well understood.

The conclusion thus reached is, I think, upheld by the Gospel of the infancy as given by St. Luke, a great part of which is unquestionably of Hebraic origin, and, as I believe, is the gift of the holy Virgin. There it is written: "The angel Gabriel was sent from God to Nazareth, a city of Galilee, to a Virgin, espoused to a man whose name was Joseph of the House of David, and the Virgin's name was Mary." Here Joseph is brought in because of his betrothment, and the mention of his lineage (though

natural) as in St. Matthew is not strictly in place, unless his lineage implies that of his betrothed. Again, it is written: "Joseph went up to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife." It would have been so natural to say, "Joseph went up to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, because *they* were of the house and lineage of David," that the language carries with it the idea that the Davidian lineage of the wife was thought to be clear from that of her husband. Unless it be thus named by implication, it is nowhere named in this part of the third Gospel. St. Luke, in a genealogy supplementary to the one given by St. Matthew, brings legal evidence, from the public registries, that the blessed Virgin was of the house of David; but this table comes after the Gospel of the infancy, and the fact that Joseph is there *twice* entitled, in connection with the blessed Virgin, prince of the house of David, without, in either case, its being said that she was a princess of the same house, is evidence that St. Matthew's mode of proving her lineage is explained by a custom of the family of David to marry only among themselves. And as St. Luke was a Greek, this justifies St. Matthew's leaving his Gospel at this point as he wrote it in Hebrew, and not changing it when he sent it forth in Greek to all nations.

It is said there were no genealogies of Hebrew women; be that as it may, in so remarkable a case, St. Matthew might naturally have given that of the holy Virgin; for he could have gotten her father's

genealogy, which was hers, from the registers, as easily as any one's. But then St. Matthew would have represented a woman of David's family as marrying a man not of that family; yet, as a word could have set that right, this only shows how full St. Matthew's statement really is on every point. Certainly its form is peculiar, and yet, it is a complete, compact, national statement.

Every way it can be explained: but the decisive reason for its peculiarity was St. Matthew's care for the safety of the Blessed Mother. The peril of the time made him extremely cautious. He had to say what he must say of her in such a way as to do no harm. St. Joseph's genealogy threw the light that had to be thrown upon her ancestors, and no more. All that inquisitors could extort from his table was the name of Joseph, the names of his ancestors, and that Mary was the name of the holy Virgin. Joseph had long been dead, and his genealogy imperiled few or none. But with the genealogy of the Blessed Mother it was somewhat different. And St. Matthew gave that proof of the lineage of Jesus which he had to give, in the way that would do the least possible harm to her and to her kindred.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOSPEL OF THE INFANCY.

ON comparing the story of the Infancy in St. Matthew's Gospel with that in St. Luke's, skeptics say, that each Gospel follows a tradition of its own. They say, that St. Matthew knows nothing of St. Luke's reason for the journey of the Virgin to Bethlehem; that with him Bethlehem is the home of the Holy Family, for Jesus is born there; that the coming of the star-led Magi to the village is told without a hint that the family lived elsewhere; that when Joseph and Mary came up out of Egypt they are going back to their home in Bethlehem; and not until they are told to go to Nazareth, a village of which they may never have heard, do they think of living there.

In St. Luke, they say, there is quite another story. The home of Joseph and Mary is at Nazareth. There they are betrothed, there they are married. A reason for their journey to Bethlehem is given. The holy Child is presented in the Temple, and after the usual rites are over, Joseph and Mary, as quietly as they came, go back to their house and home in Nazareth. Of the Wise Men and the star, of the flight, of the massacre, St. Luke knows nothing; and he is equally ignorant of the

command to Joseph and Mary to hide in distant Nazareth. The parts of the evidence of this seeming variance fit nicely to each other; and I know of nothing of its kind that is stronger.

And here let us mark the importance of the testimony of the ever-existing Congregation to the order in which the Gospels were written. Those orthodox critics, who have suffered themselves to be drawn into conjectures opposed to that testimony, imperil the defense of the Gospels they wish to aid, but whose conditions they do not understand. For the defense of those two Gospels here rests upon their time-order as it has ever been known. And St. Luke's course is of itself good evidence that he wrote after St. Matthew, and that St. Matthew's Gospel was known to the whole Congregation; for, evidently, St. Luke was silent as to the flight into Egypt and all that went with it, because he needed not to add one word to what St. Matthew had written.

And strange as St. Luke's silence would be in a like case in a modern writer, who would, at least, so allude to what was written before as to show his knowledge of it, an ancient writer might have done as St. Luke did. It is not more strange than the passing over of the Ministry in Judea by all the three earlier Evangelists without a word of their own, to show that there ever was any such. And here, as usual, the criticism of unbelief ends in difficulty greater than the difficulty it rejoices in thinking it has found; for it is utterly unable to explain the silence, not only of St. Luke, but also of the other

Evangelists, concerning the coming of the Magi and the flight into Egypt.

But still there is need to consider St. Matthew's omission to state that Nazareth was, and that Bethlehem was not, the home of the Virgin before the birth of the holy Child. For the home of a mother is likely to be where her child is born, and usually may be inferred from it. But the guarded silence or reserve of St. Matthew concerning all that might touch the safety of the Blessed Mother or of her kindred, shaped some things that he wrote; and thus it may have been that he made only this mention of the birth of the Lord: "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, . . . there came wise men from the East." The inference from this verse, that St. Matthew took Bethlehem to be the home of the Holy Family, would have been stronger were it not that in such a passing allusion to the birth of Jesus nothing could have been said of their home. But with some show of reason skeptics insist, that this would have come in, naturally, in the course of the chapter; and that, with what is told of the return from Egypt, the inference drawn from the whole narrative that Bethlehem was the home, is as certain as that St. Luke says, it never was at Bethlehem and always was at Nazareth. And it is only by gaining some insight into why St. Matthew wrote as he did, and by marking just what he did say and what he did *not* say, that it can be made clear that his Gospel and that of St. Luke are not at variance.

Though on reading the earliest Gospel only, we

suppose that Bethlehem was the home of the Holy Family, that from Egypt they meant to go back there, and had not lived in Nazareth; yet, when we learn from St. Luke how those things were, and then look more closely, we see that what we took to have been the facts were only probabilities, were conclusions of ours, not statements of St. Matthew. The facts were these. The Holy Family did not sojourn long in the land of the Nile, for vengeance hurried fast on the footprints of crime. Very soon Herod and Antipater, "they who had sought the young Child's life," (for such is the historic significance of the plural the angel used,) both died miserably, the son slain a few days before his father's death and by his father's command. Then the angel told St. Joseph to go into the land of Israel. After that the angel told him to go into Galilee. He went there; and he dwelt in Nazareth.

In holy Scripture the words of the angels prove themselves to be supernatural words by the fullness, the depth, and height of meaning they express in a small compass. What fullness in the brief anthem at the nativity! "Glory to God in the highest! On earth peace and good-will to man!" How great the thought, how few the words! The words of the angels are always few. In precision and brevity their speech compares with the speech of men as the wording of a telegram with that of a letter, and hence there is need to mark what they do not say as well as what they do say. When St. Joseph came up out of Egypt the angel did not tell him to go to Bethlehem, but *to go into the land of Israel.*

From the next verses we learn that Joseph came into the land of Israel, but when he heard that Archelaus—to whom he hoped that Samaria only, or Galilee, or the region beyond Jordan, might be assigned—"did reign in Judea, he was afraid to go thither." Precisely here, where the wording of St. Matthew's Gospel has legal precision, skeptics assume that St. Matthew says that St. Joseph was going to Bethlehem; and then they argue, that when this new fact is joined to his statement that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and to his silence as to His Mother's living elsewhere, it is certain that St. Matthew took Bethlehem to have been her home.

All this is clearly wrong. St. Joseph was told by the angel to "go into the land of Israel," and then the narrative, through its mention of his being afraid to go into Judea, is definite as to the province where St. Joseph was going, and it is definite as to nothing else. It does not say whether St. Joseph meant to dwell in Jerusalem, or in Bethlehem, or in Hebron, or elsewhere in Judea. And if St. Joseph had been going back to Bethlehem the verse would probably have run thus: "When he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea he was afraid to go to Bethlehem." It may, however, be said that, as the holy Child was born there, and as the Holy Family set out from thence when they fled into Egypt, the fair presumption is that they were going back to Bethlehem. That is a fair presumption; still St. Matthew does not say they had any such purpose; and there is a strong presumption from his narrative that St. Joseph had no thought of going to Bethlehem again. The

Egyptian Jews were in constant communication with their mother country, and St. Joseph, alive to every rumor, could not have been ignorant of the murder of the boys of Bethlehem; and it is not to be thought that, without a divine command, he would have dwelt among that bereaved people, in the last place where the Holy Family could have lived in happiness or in safety.

And there is another strong presumption against it. When recalled into the land of Israel the breadth of the command was consistent with his dwelling any where within the original boundaries of the tribes; but only in Judea was the sanctity that once hallowed all the land of Israel unprofaned; and there was the temple of the one living and true God. It is probable, then, that St. Joseph was going to the holy city. There he would be cheered with the piety of Zacharias and Elisabeth, of Simeon the Just, of Anna the aged prophetess, and of all who looked for redemption in Israel. There, in the Temple, he might take counsel with God. And he naturally felt that the holy city was the only fitting place in which to bring up the holy Child. But the earthly guardian of the Mother and the Child was burdened with great responsibilities, and even before he heard about Archelaus he may not have fully decided what he ought to do. Thus we come back to the indefinitely definite statement of the Evangelist, that the family was on its way to Judea. That is all we are told; still, it is very certain that they had no thought of living in Bethlehem, and it is very probable that the decision of the question

whether they should live in Jerusalem, or in Hebron, or elsewhere, was left to the councils of holy men and women, the course of events, and the intimations of the will of God.

Those skeptics who say that St. Matthew makes Bethlehem the home of Joseph and Mary also say that they dwelt in Nazareth solely because of a divine command, and then they argue that here Matthew and Luke are at twofold variance, that they disagree as to the home before the birth, and as to how it came to be afterwards at Nazareth. Error here fits curiously well to error. But if the reserve of St. Matthew as to the blessed Mother explains his passing over the fact that her home was in Nazareth when he speaks of her in Bethlehem, it explains it in all cases, be they ever so many.

Even had St. Matthew said that Nazareth became the home of the Holy Family by a divine command, he would then have given the supernatural, and St. Luke the natural, reason why the holy Child was brought up in Nazareth; and it might have well been said that a supernatural direction properly decided so great a question.

But the facts were these: Tidings of the death of Herod and of the accession of Archelaus went down to Egypt very close together; yet before the couriers, racing over the desert, had carried the later news, St. Joseph, told by the angel of the death of Herod, was on his way "to the land of Israel;" for while journeying over that same desert, he thought that Antipas, a prince of a gentler kind than Archelaus, was in his father's place. When

he came into the settlement and heard the ominous news then flying over the seas to Rome, of the massacre in and around Jerusalem, that signalized the accession of Archelaus to power, St. Joseph feared those hills, whose dark outlines he saw along the eastern edge of the plain. He dared not enter the pass that winds its way up to the city. He had reasonable, insoluble, fearful doubts, and knew not where to go. In his perplexity he was told to move on to Galilee. He was told that much, but no more. The burden on his soul had been that he must take the holy Child into holy Judea, and when told that he might move on to Galilee, he knew just where to go in Galilee; and by saying "he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth," St. Matthew refers his going there to St. Joseph himself; for, otherwise, he would have said, "Being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside to Nazareth in Galilee." The words of St. Matthew point to some fact that he does not state; and learning from St. Luke that the home of Joseph had been in Nazareth before he went to Bethlehem, we know why Joseph, divinely told that he might go into Galilee, went to Nazareth. He had lived there before, and had been only a few months away.

How it came about that the holy Child was brought up in that wicked town would never have been known, but for St. Luke. There would have been none to tell that, perhaps ages before, some of David's humbled line had sought the village at the head of the glen, out of the way of armies, too poor and too weak to provoke the cupidity or the

anger of kings, and that the Virgin lived there before she was called to King David's town of Bethlehem.

Another example of how one verse of Scripture often clears up another is seen in the verses, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene," and, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" From Nathanael's question we know that Nazareth was a village of evil fame; and this agrees with what St. Luke alone tells of the evil conduct of the Nazarenes, so unlike any thing that Jesus met with elsewhere in Galilee.

I do not remember having ever seen even a conjecture as to why Nazareth had that character, but may not the reason be found in the following facts? The village was at the head of a pass that, in five or six miles, winds its steep way more than a thousand feet above the rich plain of Esdraelon. In the troubled times in Israel, marauding Arabs came into that open plain and carried off flocks and harvests. The Nazarenes may have gone down there for plunder, and if pursued on their way back, no body of horsemen could well have followed them, (though the valley be somewhat open,) for here and there a few ruffians could have held the way against a hundred armed men. The land, under the Roman rule, was quiet, and flocks and herds and harvests were secure, but an evil name and an evil character live long.

Whether this be sufficient to account for it or not, it is certain that Nazareth had a bad name.

All the prophets, consenting together, foretold that the Messiah would be despised, and Joseph, by living in Nazareth, unconsciously aided in the fulfilling of their prediction. For thus it came to pass that Jesus was styled the Nazarene. The reproach of this name passed over to his people, and to this day, wherever the widespread Arabic is spoken, his people are known to Jews and Mohammedans as Nazarenes.

Heretofore the defense of these chapters of St. Matthew — two chapters so much spoken against that if defended, unbelievers must confess that there are no chapters in the Gospels that may not be defended—has given no reason why St. Matthew did not say that Nazareth originally was, and that Bethlehem was not, the home of Joseph and Mary. Yet one thing should have been clear. It was so natural for Matthew to say that little about Bethlehem, or that little about Nazareth, it was so difficult for him to keep from some intimation of how the facts were, that only by design could he have avoided every thing of the kind. With this in mind, it seems as if he struck out something written in his first two chapters, and this would give them the fragmentary look they are thought to have, and the like of which is nowhere else in his Gospel. But whether he left out something, or whether the pages now stand as he wrote them at first, his veiling of that fact as to Nazareth may have come from his unwillingness to disclose more than he must disclose concerning the blessed Mother and her kindred. From what he wrote an inquis-

itor might have taken Bethlehem to have been originally her home; but as to that, he needs no defense, for whether he was bound to tell all he knew was a question for him to decide.

All the Jews knew that Jesus came from Nazareth; his enemies never tired of calling him the Nazarene, and St. Matthew's stating only what they knew so well proves that he did not care to have it known, from what he wrote, that Nazareth was aforetime the home of the blessed Mother and her kindred; but still, my idea of his reserve as to Nazareth (or rather, of the reason for it, for *the fact* is certain) may seem to my friendly and tireless reader to carry St. Matthew's caution beyond all bounds. And yet, though I had to confess that in my view of St. Matthew's course at this point there is something that looks like excess of prudence, still I might repeat that it is caution I am proving, not why it went further than we might think it would; and that it would be hard, when so many of the circumstances in which he wrote are forgotten, even to conjecture the forms it might take, and just how far it would go.

And I yet have evidence that may have some bearing on the question as to Nazareth, while it strengthens my general argument. With this evidence I close the case, and submit it to the Church, holy and universal. My readers will have noted that more than once I have spoken of St. Matthew's caution, not only for the blessed Mother, *but also for her kindred*, when he sent his Gospel forth amid the perils in which the first Christian

martyr died. I now ask attention to evidence *of his caution for them.* As evidence of his general caution I have before pointed to his silence concerning the healing of the son of the nobleman of Capernaum, and I would have my readers picture for themselves busy Capernaum on the day that miracle was wrought — the crowds marveling in the gates, in the market-place, and around the house. It was the first kindling up of the great light that was to shine along "the way of the sea." It opened the way for the dwelling of Jesus in Capernaum. It may have led to the conversion of St. Matthew. But I touch upon these things only to bring out the greatness of the wonder that Matthew does not speak of that miracle. Neither does Mark or Luke. It seems most strange!

One of the Fathers tells us to study the Gospels, searching for the reason of each recorded fact. Here it is in the line of his precept to search for the reason why a miracle is not recorded where we should think it would have been, for surely we may look for a record of that miracle in the Gospels of both St. Matthew and St. Peter, for they were Capernaum people. They knew that nobleman, for Peter had sold fish in the court-yard of his palace, Matthew had receipted for his tax. And in the third Gospel the record may also be looked for, for it was a Galilean miracle.

My readers will remember that when Jesus wrought this miracle in Capernaum He was Himself in Cana. They will also remember that this was the second miracle that Jesus did in Cana of Gali-

lee; and that, although the earlier miracle was the first manifestation of the divine energy of the Lord, Matthew, Mark, and Luke are silent as to *both*. It is true those two miracles were before the imprisonment of the Baptist, from which the earlier Evangelists date the fullness of our Lord's ministry; but we feel that this can hardly be the sufficient and full reason for this remarkable and continuous silence of all those Evangelists concerning the miracles in Cana of Galilee.

As both of them were wrought in the same village, possibly the place had something to do with their silence. And I think we shall conclude that it did grow out of the fact that Cana was the home of kindred of the Virgin. It was their home at the wedding-feast; for she was there, ordering with a kinswoman's right, and her Son was sent for and came to the wedding. Nazareth was then her home; but after the brutal rage of the Nazarenes toward Jesus it could not long have been the home of any of her kindred. Sooner or later their spiteful neighbors must, in every evil way, have worried them out of the town. They were too poor to go far. Cana was not far, and it was already the home of some of them. The holy Mother lived in Jerusalem with St. John; but that Cana became the shelter for her kindred, from time to time the gathering place of them all, I think is certain from the silence of the three earlier Evangelists as to that village. While inquisitors were searching all the way to Damascus for the blessed Mother and for her kindred, St. Matthew would not draw attention to

that village. He knew that his colleague St. John would record those miracles—in one of which the fact that he was screening could not but appear—*and he said not a word of Cana.* His reason for caution continued when the second Gospel was written; there was his example also; and St. Mark said not a word of Cana. Before the third Gospel was written all need of caution for the blessed Mother had ceased; but, as in the case of the family of Bethany, there was still reason for caution concerning the kindred of the holy Virgin; and like St. Matthew and like St. Mark, both of whose examples were before him, St. Luke said not a word of Cana. That silence was not broken till Zion was a plowed field—*then,* when all need of caution had passed, the last evangelist told of the marriage and the miracles in Cana of Galilee.

IN Nazareth Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, in wicked Nazareth he grew "in favor with God and man." He lived there until he was "about thirty years of age." He waited there for "the fullness of time;" and that waiting in years of silence is not the least instructive lesson of His life. Meanwhile "the fullness of time" was preparing. The weak and cruel Archelaus ruled for some eleven years; then the Emperor Augustus, feigning to yield to the outcries of the Jews, but carrying out a policy determined upon before the death of Herod, banished Archelaus to Gaul, where he died an exile. The Emperor then annexed Judea to the imperial

province of Syria. Thus, at the time of the condemnation of the Son of Man the union of Judea with Rome was a more direct and vital one than that of such districts as Galilee or the regions beyond Jordan, where native princes (Herod Philip and Herod Antipas) were suffered to rule; and it was more direct and vital than that of provinces over which the Senate had a nominal sovereignty—so much had the Emperor become identified with Rome.

In Syria, at Antioch, once the regal city of Greek kings who succeeded to dominions of Alexander, Cæsar was represented by a proprætor. In Judea he, in his turn, was represented by a procurator. (the Roman governor of the Evangelists.) His palace was at Cæsarea, by the sea, and from time to time he came up to Jerusalem. He enriched himself and his minions, and, careless of all else, he interfered but little with the local and ecclesiastical rule of the Sanhedrim. That parliament of the Jews was hardly more than a tradition during the long tyranny of Herod, but it had regained, and was sternly bent on keeping, a little of power. Tiberius, the heir of Augustus Cæsar, was severe and jealous, yet impartial. Under his rule the imperial provinces had less cause of complaint than under the rule of some of the later Emperors; and the change from the Herodian to the imperial house, and the restoration to the Sanhedrim of a semblance of its ancient honors, was followed by comparative repose. Yet the Romans troubled the people, and so did the ecclesiastic *noblesse*. They

suffered from the Romans in common with others, yet secretly they favored their rule. The people, deluded by their leaders yet mistrusting them, grew more unquiet, more and more bitter against the Romans, until, at last, the exactions of the representatives of Cæsar, and the restlessness caused by the popular expectation of the coming of the Messiah, drove the Jews into that war with Rome which was the beginning of their punishment for the crime of rejecting the Son of Man. While the storm was gathering there was a breathing space. In that pause Christ Jesus came, and only then, in the Roman Age in Palestine, was the state of the government and of the people such that even His brief ministry was possible.

Both the date of the Gospels and the historic truthfulness of the Evangelists are attested by their living intimacy with the character and life, the hopes and fears, the opinions, prejudices, and passions of the Jews in the interval between the banishment of Archelaus and the fall of Jerusalem, and with the peculiar and complicate state of political and social affairs in Judea. They take us right into the midst of them. They give no formal descriptions of them, for they do not feel the need of any. They take them to be known to all as unconsciously as seamen take seafaring ways to be known to every body. St. Matthew and St. John tell of what they had seen and heard. St. Mark had seen something of what he described, and both St. Mark and St. Luke knew from living men of the things of which they wrote. It is almost as apparent when

St. Luke treats of what was done in Judea that he is treating of what took place in his own day and generation as the like is in the writings of the other Evangelists; and this is quite as apparent when he takes us out of that country. The minute accuracy of his descriptions has often been shown, and never better than in what a seaman did to clear up and verify the narrative of the shipwreck of St. Paul.*

The writings of the Evangelists unmistakably

* An Englishman, James Smith, Esq., of Jordanhill, who in his yacht made voyages to clear up the voyage of St. Paul. He studied the building, rigging, and handling of the ships of the ancients; he sailed the seas over which the Apostle was borne; felt their winds, noted their currents, the headlands of the coasts, and visited their harbors. He knew how sailors describe the land as seen from shipboard, and understood the meaning of their terms, which, as repeated by St. Luke, had puzzled ministers. His sea-faring, his knowledge of the matter in hand, and his good sense, cleared up all that had been obscure in St. Luke's journal of the voyage; and some strange fancies then disappeared—such as that of the poet Coleridge, who, having written "The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner," was very sure that he must be right in his opinion that the scene of the shipwreck was in the Adriatic, a nautical impossibility as the course of the vessel and the winds were; or that of another dreamer, who was equally sure that the hunger of those storm-tossed heathen was a voluntary fast for the good of their souls! The readers of the latest English Life of St. Paul are not made aware how much the elucidation of the voyage by the clergyman owes to the book of the sailor, (published by Longman in 1848, and not, I think, reprinted here;) but in their Life of the Apostle Conybeare and Howson justly speak of it as "a standard work not only in England but in Europe." The sailor showed what can be done when the right man takes hold of a thing in the right way. What he did was well done and well worth the doing! Yet such the self-evidencing force of simple truthfulness, that I cannot but think that all right-minded souls have ever felt as sure of the truth of St. Luke's picture of the voyage as they do now, when, point by point, it has been cleared up, tested and proved.

belong to the time of which they treat. Only men who lived in that time could have known it so well. Some of the evidence of this comes from out-of-the-way places, where scholars have to hunt it up; as when, for instance, a peculiar title given by St. Luke to the magistrates of Thessalonica was found on an inscription of that time on a crumbling wall in that city. But no antiquarian lore is needed for a just appreciation of the best part of this kind of evidence for the time in which the Gospels were written. The best part of this evidence is like the best part of the evidence in nature of the being of God, which comes not of dredging in the sea, nor from delving in the strata of the earth, nor from calculating the flight of comets; it comes not from discoveries that make us think of man's cleverness as well as of the wisdom of God, but comes from the broad, open face of nature, from the earth and the sky, from the mountains, the plains, the rivers, and the sea. That best part of the evidence of the being of God is open, is common to all, and is so clear that science can no more add to its satisfying power than it can take it away. And thus open, common, and clear to all is the best part of the evidence of the historic truthfulness of the holy Gospels.

PART THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORAL AND THE WRITTEN GOSPEL.

LET us open the Third Part of this volume with a glance at the relations of the Miracles, Discourses, and Parables in the Four Gospels to the oral Gospel. The recorded miracles are *thirty-three* in number. The sacramental miracle, the feeding of the five thousand, is the only one that is given by all the Evangelists. Six miracles are given only by St. John. To find out which of *the other twenty-seven miracles* belonged to the oral Gospel I count those that are common to the three earlier Gospels. As we might almost have known beforehand, their number is *twelve*. They are: the cleansing of leprosy, the cure of fever, of paralysis, of a withered hand, of blindness, of an issue of blood; but the record of the last is interwoven with that of another miracle. The other *five* are the walking on the sea, the stilling of the storm, the feeding of the five thousand, the cure of the demoniacs, the raising of the dead.

In these miracles Jesus is the giver of the bread of life, the redeemer from the leprosy, the fever, the paralysis of sin, the Saviour from death, the conse-

quence of sin. They reveal his power over nature and over the spirits of evil. The teaching of this cycle of typical signs is very complete, and *these twelve miracles* (more than any others, save some that are given only by St. John) are the miracles that now dwell in the mind and memory of the family of Christ.

Such the confidence of His chosen Witnesses in the proof they offer of the divinity of the Lord that they feel there is no need to accumulate even such evidence of it as the raising of the dead. They select but one such miracle for their oral Gospel; and their example accounts for the absence of the miracle at Nain from the first and second Gospels.

Of *the other fifteen miracles* in the earlier Gospels *five* are twice told. Three of these—the feeding of the four thousand, the healing of the daughter of the Syro-Phœnician woman, and the withering of the fig-tree—are given by St. Matthew and by St. Mark. The healing of the demoniac in the synagogue at Capernaum is given by St. Mark and by St. Luke, and the cure of the centurion's servant by St. Matthew and by St. Luke. All of the fifteen miracles formed a part of the teaching of the Witnesses. Still, I think it likely that *only the twelve miracles, common to the earlier Gospels,* belonged to the more fixed, authoritative, common form of the oral Gospel; for I find in the recital of nearly every one of those fifteen miracles (if not, indeed, in all of them) some relation between them and the characters of the Evangelists or the plans of their Gospels, such as goes to account for the Evangelists'

overstepping the bounds of the oral Gospel. Thus the two miracles that are in the second Gospel only, are cures of blindness and deafness wrought gradually, with some use of means; and such uncommon facts would naturally strike the curious and active mind of St. Peter. Two blind men were taken into a house and charged to say nothing of what was done, and St. Matthew may have given this miracle because of its unwonted privacy; not, indeed, (and throughout this inquiry it is to be kept in mind in all similar cases,) that the reason given is the sole or the chief reason, but merely that it is the reason seen from our present stand-point.

When St. Matthew tells of the smiting of Malchus we listen to one who was there, though some argue, from his silence as to the healing of the wound, that here his Gospel is fragmentary or legendary. The wound was little thought of on that awful night, and St. Matthew speaks of it, not for its own sake, but for the sake of what his Master said, and not so much for the words, "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword," memorable as they are, as for the words, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Those words touch the darkness of that hour with a ray of "the light that never was on sea or land." Those words attest to the majesty of Jesus in that permitted hour of the Prince of this world. They do more—the reason for what then was suffered to be, was struck out (as truth often is) in the collision of events, for his words show that Christ Jesus sac-

rificed Himself for the sins of His people, and that the prophets told of this beforehand.

How strong the contrast here between the divine and the human! And on the human side all how natural! That eleven men of Galilee stood by and struck no blow for their Prophet, though strong the array that came against him, never could have been. Peter could not have been there, nor Thomas, who would have died for his Master, nor the two "sons of thunder." It would have disgraced human nature had not that blow been given for the Son of Man! It almost redeems the after behavior of the disciples. That was strange, but their Master's course was strange to them. "Put up thy sword," they could not understand. Peter's mind and the minds of them all reeled with the shock. They all forsook him and fled. But they came at last to understand; and as often as St. Matthew recalled the never-forgotten night of woe and shame he thought of his Master's words; but he neither then nor afterward gave a thought to the healing of the wound —not that he forgot it, but it was to him as if he remembered it not. St. Luke, who was not there, wrote more as an historian would; he tells of the healing, and this he was all the more likely to do, because it was a surgical miracle (the only one of its kind) and St. Luke was a doctor.

In the recital of this train of events there is some confirmation, of what before was intimated of an argument for the date of the Gospels, that might be drawn from their handling of names. Peter knew not whom he struck, and cared not. In the stroke

of his sword there was an outflash of Galilean fire that all the Disciples in their hearts admired; yet, as it did not meet their Master's approval, they cared not to say who struck the blow, and the absence from the earlier Gospels of the names of the smiter and the smitten is a natural one. St. John wrote when the lapse of time had deadened the early feeling, and in his narrative both names come out incidentally. That night Peter was in the courtyard of the palace, warming himself at a fire, for the night was cold. John (to whom the high-priest's household were known) was with him. "The son of thunder" was a brave man, but he never forgot the start of apprehension with which, in that perilous place and time, he heard a servant, whom he knew to be a kinsman of him who was struck, say to Peter, "Did I not see thee in the garden?" St. John could hardly tell of these things without its coming out that Peter struck that man with his sword; and, full of the memories of that night, he says, so naturally that we hear him say it, "And that man's name was Malchus." *

To have imagined such a train of events was beyond Shakspeare, its consistent naturalness was beyond De Foe; yet this is only one (and is far from being the most striking one) of the multitude of narratives in the Evangeliad that are like it in consistency, in naturalness, in depths of truth beyond the thoughts of men; and when critics, with an insolent affectation of contempt for those who know better, decry the Gospels as legendary and

* Matt. xxvi, 51; Mark xiv, 47; Luke xxiii, 51; John xviii, 10, 18, 26.

fragmentary, their criticisms can only be the outcome of their hatred of truth!

Antecedently it is probable that some of *the fifteen miracles* were selected out of those that belonged to the oral Gospel. The miracle of the healing of the woman with a spirit of infirmity was also a cure of demonism; that miracle and the cure of the man with dropsy were among the seven Sabbatical miracles. Great would be the loss of those narratives, even looking at them merely as lighting up the difficulties and dangers of the mercy of the Saviour, the evil spirit it called forth, and His way of meeting it; and yet it should be noted (though it may press the argument too far) that those miracles are told only by the physician.

Whatever be thought of this, it is characteristic that the collector of taxes tells (and he is the only one that does) of the miraculous procuring of silver to pay a tax. Of course there were other reasons, and on these let us pause for an instant. Some of the fathers, and some good interpreters since their time, hold this tax to have been the Roman tribute; and it is a cheering sign of an ever-growing intelligence of Scripture that this has given place to the idea that it was the Temple tax. All Israel paid the Temple tax so readily that Peter promptly gave his word that his Master would pay it. His Lord's questions taught Peter his Lord's true relation to the Temple; for His theocratic claim that He was greater than the Temple is as clearly implied in the questions of the earlier Gospel as it is clearly expressed in the words of the last.

To all the ridicule of the fish with the silver in its mouth it has often been well answered that while it became the Captain of our salvation (as He said at his baptism) to fulfill all righteousness, yet if he paid that tax there was a strong reason why, in so doing, he should vindicate his claim to be the Son of God, lest that payment should seem to contradict it. To those who have eyes to see, the miracle plainly shows the omniscience of the Lord and his power over the natural world. And what our Lord did is characteristic in its being suited to him for whom it was done, He who taught star-gazers by a star, teaching the fisherman by the miracle of the fish. St. Matthew tells of these things after he says that the disciples were exceeding sorry because of what their Lord foretold of His death; and though there be an air of strangeness about this miracle, the infidel notion that here there is something legendary is decisively refuted by St. Matthew's handling of the history. Many have spoken against and many have defended this miracle, who have not marked that St. Matthew says nothing directly about it. The miracle is always spoken of *as if it were wrought:* it comes into every list of the thirty-three recorded miracles, *and yet there is no record of it.* Surely this could not have been were there any thing legendary here, and surely any other writer would have said more. The sign-manual of Matthew the Silent is stamped on the page. He stops with the command of his Lord, and what he does not say is as effective as what any one else would have said. We are as sure from his silence

as we could have been from any words, that Peter ran to the lake, threw the line, and paid the silver.*

The healing of the daughter of the Syro-Phœnician woman is in keeping with the design of St. Matthew in that section of his Gospel where it comes in. The recital of the miraculous draught

* Farrar says, in his "Life of Christ," (chap. xxxviii:) "When Paulus calls this 'a miracle for half a crown' he only shows his own entire misconception of the fine ethical lessons in the narrative. Yet I agree with Olshausen in regarding this as the most difficult to comprehend of all the Gospel miracles." "It is remarkable," says Archbishop Trench, "*and is a solitary instance of the kind*, that the issue of this bidding is not told us." He goes on to say, indeed, that the narrative is evidently *intended* to be miraculous, and this impression is almost universal. Yet the literal translation of our Lord's words may certainly be "on opening its mouth thou shalt get, or obtain, a *stater;* and the peculiarities of the miracle and of the manner in which it is narrated leave in my mind a doubt whether some essential particular may not have been omitted or left unexplained." This insinuated questioning of the narrative has not escaped the writer of the infidel article on the Gospels in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and is there used against the Scriptures.

The Commentary edited by Bishop Ellicott leans to the idea (suggested also by Farrar) that there was no miracle. "The wonder does not originate in our Lord's compassion, nor depend upon faith in the receiver, [how does he know that?] nor set forth a spiritual truth. [But it was wrought in attestation of our Lord's divinity at a time when the Disciples greatly needed enlightenment and confirmation of faith, and there may have been special need of this in the training of Peter.] This would not be of much weight against a direct statement, but it may be of some significance in the exceptional absence of such a statement. On these grounds some explain our Lord's words as meaning, in figurative language, that Peter was to catch the fish and sell it for a *stater*." In view of such comments (and there is not space for others like them) the importance of what is said above of St. Matthew's style will be seen. Here, as in several other places, clearer insight into his peculiarities as a writer is needed, to clear up what has not been made clear by those who have written concerning this miracle.

of fishes (at the call of the Apostles) did not consist with his plan in the earlier part of his Gospel; nor did the describing of it consist with St. Peter's reticence as to things personal to himself. St. Luke, seeing their omission of this miracle, records it; and that he did so seems providential (if the word may be permitted as conveniently expressing what cannot be misunderstood) when the teaching of this miracle, at the opening of our Lord's ministry, is compared with the teaching of the similar one after His resurrection, given only by St. John.

So many have said that St. Matthew's Gospel has no plan that there is need of proving what has just been said, but this would pass our present limits. None have questioned that St. Luke had a plan, and every one will see that his recital of the healing of the ten lepers (given, like the parable of the Good Samaritan, only by him) is in fine accord with the spirit of his Pauline Gospel. On looking from our present point of view, he may be said to have given it a place for the sake of these words: "When one of the Ten saw that he was healed he turned back and with a loud voice glorified God and fell down on his face at the feet of Jesus giving him thanks, *and he was a Samaritan.*" St. Luke passes over the typical and prophetic miracle of the withering of the fig-tree, a kind of acted parable, but he relates a parable of a fig-tree (given only by him) where the lesson is much the same.* And I think it has become certain to my readers, from the selection by the Evangelists of the fifteen miracles, that the

* See St. Luke, chap. xvii, 11–19.

fullness of a living tradition was flowing around the Evangelists when they wrote.

Reasoning in the same way concerning the discourses in their Gospels, we conclude that the whole or a part of the Sermon on the Mount belonged to the oral Gospel, and also the prophecy on Mount Olivet. Our Lord's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem must have had a place in all the early teaching of the Apostles; but, though the prophecy passed far beyond the judgment of Jerusalem, yet having been fulfilled so far as Jerusalem was concerned, and having been thrice recorded, the prophecy (and for the same reason, in part, the Sermon on the Mount) is not given by the last Evangelist.

Our course of reasoning farther leads to the conclusion that *three* of the *thirty* recorded parables—the Sower, the Mustard-seed, and the Wicked Husbandman—belonged to the common oral Gospel. When we before said that the Evangelists thoughtfully marked times and seasons when it was of psychological and spiritual moment, we should have said that St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke carefully note the occasion or reason for our Lord's teaching in parables. The like, no doubt, was done by all the Twelve; but they could hardly have noted our Lord's new manner of teaching without giving the *first* example of that manner; and in that parable, the Sower *is Christ himself.* The parable of the Mustard-seed, revealing that, from a small beginning, sure and vast would be the growth of the kingdom of Christ, conveyed instruction well-suited

to the early Christians, as also did the parable of the Wicked Husbandman, which is in such harmony with the word on Mount Olivet. Our course of reasoning also leads us to conclude that two other parables — the Lost Sheep and the Leaven — belonged to the oral Gospel. Besides those five parables, it is probable that some of the *ten* given by St. Matthew and some of the *twelve* given by St. Luke, also formed part of the oral Gospel, although it is not likely that this was the case with all those *twenty-two* parables.

By those who press the seeming difference between the Evangelists, much has been made of the fact that there is no parable in the last Gospel; but it seems to me that the thirty parables recorded in the Gospel before St. John wrote, may have been all the parables that our Lord ever uttered. If that were so, it would seem to end the matter; but the charge is so made as not in this way to be fully disposed of. For, in the last Gospel, our Lord's style and manner of teaching are said to be unlike His style and manner of teaching in the earlier Gospels, and one of the items of the evidence of this, is the absence of parables from the last Gospel. I have before touched upon this charge, and here reply to it only so far as parables are concerned. Our Lord made this kind of teaching so rich, so tender, so divinely wise, that we are apt to forget (although we are told so in the Scripture) that he did not use this kind of teaching until the more hopeful days of his ministry were over; that his enemies drove him to it, and that he was not in the way of using

it toward his friends. Now, in the first four chapters of St. John parables are not to be looked for, because those chapters are given to a time before our Lord began to use them. Neither are parables to be looked for in long discourses. There are none in the Sermon on the Mount, none in the Prophecy on Mount Olivet, though the word is there applied to a brief saying. Parables would have been out of place in our Lord's long, last farewell to his own family; and parables are not to be looked for in the chapters that tell of his Trial and Crucifixion; nor in those that are given to what took place after his Resurrection.

Here a little humble arithmetic avails; for let us subtract from the *twenty-one* chapters of St. John the *thirteen* chapters in which no parables are to be looked for, and only *eight* remain. In the long chapter given to the Raising of Lazarus the circumstances and the persons are such that there was no place for such teaching: and, thus, the question is narrowed down to *seven* chapters, that cover only as many days. The charge, then, comes to this: Seven days in the life of our Lord are recorded in the Gospel of St. John, in which he uttered no parable; and surely there may have been seventy times that number of such days in the course of the three years of his ministry!

In the last Gospel, the form of His utterance (as has often been noticed) is parabolic: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into

everlasting life." And, as the evidence of the charge of variance between the earlier and the last Gospels so far as parables are concerned, has been ciphered down to the unimportant fact that for seven days, or parts of days, our Lord uttered no parable, it is clear that of the items of the evidence of that alleged variance this one of the parables must be struck from the list.

CHAPTER II.

ST. JOHN AND THE EARLIER GOSPELS.

ALMOST unconsciously we have passed on to the relations of the Evangelists with each other. Reasons why the earlier Gospels were so limited to the ministry in Galilee and regions outside of Judea were given in treating of the division of the field of our Lord's ministry made between the elect Evangelists St. Matthew and St. John, and in treating of the general relations of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke to the oral Gospel. But it has been charged that St. John disagrees with St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke as to the beginning of our Lord's ministry. This charge of variance grows out of the four earliest chapters of St. John's Gospel, which are given to ministrations in Judea before the imprisonment of the Baptist; and we are to answer it by showing from those chapters that up to that date our Lord's course was of a tentative or preparatory kind. In those chapters relations of the final with the earlier Gospels, which meet other charges of variance, disclose themselves; and some further reasons for the structure of the earlier Gospels appear. The standpoint from which we look upon those chapters is not the common one. Their facts will be seen in

somewhat of a new light. They have given rise to several questions of their own; and, interweaving a running comment into my argument, I shall discursively treat of those chapters with more fullness than my immediate purpose requires.

There are beginnings on beginnings in the kingdoms of nature and of grace. Things so run into each other that no one beginning excludes the thought of all others. What *was*, so becomes one with what *is*, that lines can hardly be drawn between the stages of the growth of the present out of the past; and though there be one instant when each created thing and each course of events most truly may be said to begin, yet to select, out of others that have some claim, the moment that has the most indisputable claim to rank as *the* beginning, is often equally difficult and unimportant. One history opens the story of a war with the hostilities that led to its declaration, another with the declaration itself; and, however it may be in science, it is sometimes a matter of indifference in history which of several moments is fixed upon as the beginning in a course of events, if it be a clear point of division.

With some reason the baptism of Christ Jesus might be held to be the beginning of his ministry. Of the baptism there was nothing left for St. John to tell; yet his silence concerning it is said to discredit the evidence of it in the other Gospels. This is strangely perverse, for St. John recites words of his old master that allude to facts at the baptism, and he leaves them unexplained, evidently because

the previous Gospels had made the facts universally known. The personal witness of the Baptist to Christ Jesus, given only by St. John, was known to St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke only by hearsay; yet there was a stronger reason for their passing over that witness, and in this was more than their own wisdom; for had they told of his witness when telling of the open heaven, the descent of the Spirit, and the Voice, the human testimony would have come too closely in contrast with testimony it could not equal, could not strengthen, and that needed nothing. Still that witness was precious; and the same Will that forbade its utterance by them treasured it up in the faithful heart of the Baptist's own disciple until it was given in a Gospel where its power is not lessened by too immediate comparison with the witness from heaven.

The great orator was not wholly a man of fiery zeal, of invective bitter and bold even to the verge of rashness. St. Matthew's portrait of the last Hebrew prophet is true to the life, but is only one portrait; that which St. John drew of his old master, whom he knew so well that he not only revered but loved him, is another portrait. The difference has not escaped the eyes of hostile critics; but the good sense and good feeling of the Baptist's counsel to soldiers and publicans (in the third Gospel) harmonizes the portrait by St. Matthew with that by St. John. The one drawn by his pupil has fine touches and a grandeur of its own; and these things are noteworthy, not for their own sake only, but because there is some difference between St.

Matthew's and St. John's portraiture of our Lord, that may, perhaps, be traced in part to a similar cause; for the pupil of the herald and the "beloved" of the King had been nearer to both, than St. Matthew.

There are touches of difference in the descriptions of the Baptism, and one of these is characteristic of the third Gospel. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke all mark that the signs were revealed *after* our Lord came up out of the water, after he had done what He himself said it was his duty to do; but only St. Luke says *they were revealed when our Lord prayed.* St. Luke repeatedly speaks of our Lord's praying when the other Evangelists do not, as at His transfiguration; or with more emphasis than they, as when "He prayed earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood." There may have been something in St. Luke's own experience that made him more alive than the others to the praying of the Lord. If that were so, still there is another fact that should go with it: St. Luke, one of the heathen-born, was quick to mark our Lord's habit of prayer; for prayer, such as the Psalms had made familiar to all the children of Israel, was quite unknown to the heathen. But hereafter we may see reason to refer this characteristic of the third Gospel not so much to the experience of the Evangelist as to the experience of St. Paul, of whom the Lord said at Damascus, "Behold, he prayeth."

What the Baptist says of knowing Jesus has been strangely dealt with, for it is consistent and clear.

Jesus was not known to him personally before they met by the river; and this might be inferred from St. Luke's saying that, until the time of his showing unto Israel, John lived in the desert—the Arabian Desert—that great sand ocean that laved the hill country of Judea on the south, and came up so near to Hebron that it was as natural for the boys of Hebron to go down there as for boys living in sight of the ocean to go to sea. Born as a sign unto Israel, the child of the old priest was safest in the black tents of some kindred or friendly Emir of the desert. That he was brought up there explains St. Matthew's picture of his dress and manner of living—the raiment of camels' hair, the leathern girdle, and the locust meat. He came unto Israel in the garb as well as in the spirit of Elias; for, in dress and manner of life, Elijah was an Arab of the desert.

Jesus and John never met before, but doubtless Jesus told John that he was the son of Mary, the kinswoman of his mother; and though John's parents must have died when he was little, doubtless he afterward heard of the signs at the birth of his cousin; for, before the baptism, he looked up to Jesus, apparently with the hope that he was the Messiah.

The Baptist came to call the people to repentance. It was a proverb with the Jews, that "if Israel would repent for one day the Messiah would come;" and along the line of this feeling the Baptist did prepare the way of the Lord; but this is what he himself said of the chief end and aim of his

coming: "He that sent me said, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost, and that he should be manifest to Israel; therefore I am come baptizing with water." When the sign was given the Baptist's hope became a certainty, and then he knew, what before he knew not, that Jesus was "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world."

With greater reason the Baptism might be held to be the beginning of our Lord's ministry—as in some true sense it was—had its signs and wonders been open and visible. Our habit of thinking that they were, is so fixed that it is hard to change it; and yet we ought rather to have thought they were not visible, for the great moments in the kingdom of grace do usually "come without observation;" and it was so then. Even as the eye sees not the spiritual miracles that now pass before it, so then the common eye saw nothing in the baptism of Jesus different from the baptism of others. This is implied in St. Luke's description. This is also certain from the Baptist's privately making known who Jesus was to a few of his own disciples; and it is stamped upon the words, "I saw and bear witness"—words of one who speaks for himself alone. To him alone of all that multitude was given what the Scripture calls "open vision." To all but him the Son of Man went down into the water and came up out of the water like the rest. The Congregation of the Lord, who now forever behold the open heavens, the Spirit descending, and hear the voice,

are highly favored above those who were baptized the same day with Christ in the Jordan.

Our Lord is not said to have spoken of the signs at his baptism. The words, "There was a man sent to bear witness," prove that all human knowledge of them rests on the testimony of the Baptist; and St. Peter may have had this in mind when he said that the one to be chosen as an apostle must be of those who had known the Baptist. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke are inspired vouchers for the truth of what the Baptist said, yet their knowledge of the Baptism came from him, and he is the sole witness of its signs and wonders. His testimony, whether heard from his own lips by St. Peter, or from the lips of his disciples, made the baptism so real to the Evangelists that their descriptions of it read as if they themselves had beheld its wonders. The Baptist's witness convinced then, and it convinces now. It is true, those signs bring their own evidence. That any one could have imagined things so fitting the hour, the Man, and the world's future is not possible. In virtue of what they are, and of their having been made known in the Gospel, they are divine testimony to Christ Jesus; and yet the Baptist's human testimony to those signs and wonders is hardly less effectual, so much nearer to us is the man than the facts. He is their sufficient witness to the human race. It seems to me that if one had seen the rending of the heavens and heard the voice he could doubt it as easily as he could doubt the word of the Baptist. What Josephus says of his power with the people

seems unhistorical, inexplicable, almost impossible, for the Baptist wrought no miracle; and, save as opening the way in the hearts of a few of his disciples for the Messiah, his influence over the people came to nothing; yet what Josephus says is borne out by the Pharisees when they would not answer the question of Jesus "because they feared the people." * Our Lord, also, said there never had been a greater man than John the Baptist, † and the power of his solitary witness is the seal set in history to our Lord's declaration.

Besides his witness to those signs and wonders there is a witness of the Baptist to Christ Jesus, given only in the final Gospel. Besides that, there is a still weightier witness in the surprising way in which St. John brings the Baptist into the sublime prelude to his Gospel. In that prelude the Apostle reveals the Eternal Word as He is hardly with equal clearness elsewhere revealed. The Apostle speaks with an awe-inspiring earnestness, yet with the calmness of deepest thought. He bends the whole force of his mind to make the facts as clear as they are certain. The inexpressible was never so well expressed. Never was so much truth embodied in words so few; not even when in the space of the palm of the hand Moses wrote of the world's generation, from the quickening of the first form of matter by the element Light, until it grew to be

* See Matt. 21, 23–27

† See Matt. xi, 2–15: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist."

the fitting home of man. St. John recalls that revelation because of the correspondence between the material and the spiritual worlds ordained by the Word who created both, and from it he takes the figure of Light, which in each is the symbol of the Word creating. The compass of his revelation transcends that of Moses as much as the spiritual transcends the material universe, and yet it is even more compressed. The utterance is measured and rhythmical, the statements are reduplicated, but this is the zigzaging of lightning that at night suddenly illuminates the heavens. Almost inconceivable is the swiftness of the thoughts! Most astounding, then, this sudden interruption, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." We seem to have come to the end of the train of thought; but no, for St. John goes on with it again as if there had been no interruption. What can this mean? How came this verse into such a revelation? What place can there be for this fact in this wonderful procession of facts? Why is this man here, as if *here* he could witness to the Eternal Word? We know the man! He was mortal like us. He was beheaded in the dungeon at Machærus. He was born in King Herod's time. His father was the old priest Zacharias. His mother was Elizabeth, of the daughters of Aaron. Why is he *here in these days of the beginning?* Can any thing make his presence unobtrusive in the midst of this wonderful revelation?

Before trying to show that the Baptist's presence fits the train of thought, let me point to touches of

a pupil's feeling for his old master. "A man was sent from God, whose name was John"—there speaks the enthusiast of other days! So St. John felt in his youth, so he always felt, and never more than now! He says that man was sent to bear witness of the Light, and only a pupil could say, "He was not that Light." The words echo the thoughts of the boy who wondered at the Baptist, until he almost believed he was the long-hoped-for of Israel! These seemingly needless and strange words at such a place and time are the clear mark and sign that the writer is St. John. By those words, the far-seeing Wisdom, who works out His own Will through the nature of man, provides against the unbelief of these times!

But there is more than a pupil's honor for his master, there is more than the memory of an old man recalling his youth, in the place that St. John gives to the words, "There was a man sent from God to bear witness of the Light." The testimony he thus brings in is closely linked in his own soul with the great truths that open his Gospel; for his soul is full of the thought of the Eternal Word; he bears inspired witness to His glory—He is the Maker of all that is made, the Life in nature, the Light in the soul, the Unity of things created—and the witness which St. John the Apostle and Evangelist here bears to Christ Jesus as the Eternal Word, John the Baptist himself had borne.

Here, in this sublime prelude to St. John's Gospel, whose far-reaching, wonderful revelation of the eternal glory of the Lord Jesus, has seemed to many

unreconcilable with the earlier Gospels; here, where this idea has been pressed with an almost unequaled strength of conviction, and with disastrous effect upon the faith of some who would fain believe; here, where the train of thought is so strangely interrupted, the earlier Gospels justify that interruption; and just here the relation between the earlier Gospels and the last Gospel proves that St. John so looked to them to make what he wrote intelligible that they are in perfect harmony with him as to the Eternal Glory of Christ Jesus. For one after the other, in almost the same words, (save with this instructive difference, that what St. Matthew and St. Luke give as the utterance of Isaiah St. Mark gives as the utterance of all the Prophets,) each and all of those three inspired Evangelists declare that John the Baptist was the Voice who was to cry, "All flesh is grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth and the flower fadeth, but the Word of our God shall stand forever." * In that prophetic word the withering of the grass is not the quick passing away of mortals one by one, it is the withering away of the race of man. In the thought of God man's continuance on the earth is a duration as brief as that of the withering grass to human thought, yet to us the generations of men seem to come and go forever; and it is the whole time-cycle of man (its briefness in the sight of God giving emphasis to the truth revealed) that is put in contrast with the Being of the Eternal Word. And this prophecy of the Eternal Word

* Isaiah xl, 3–9.

was the Baptist's cry in the wilderness, the burden of his message to Israel. By marking this, the earlier Evangelists (whose insight into the truths they reveal will ever be more apparent as man grows to be more in sympathy with their intelligence and grace) reveal the same truth that is revealed by St. John; and in them alone is found the reason—when once seen, a most sufficient, plain, and certain reason—why St. John brings the witness of the Baptist into the prelude to his Gospel.

Scholars of a skeptical turn of mind have busied themselves with the question, Where did St. John get the germ of his idea of the Eternal Word? Not choosing to see that the chapter of Genesis (which was in his mind while writing) may have suggested it, they used to say that he got it from Plato. This is one of many scholastic illusions closely verging on deceptions, that carrying with them a weight of authority to humble souls trouble their hearts; yet there is no likelihood that St. John ever read a Dialogue of Plato, and if he had known all of Plato's Dialogues by heart he could not have gotten out of them what is not in them. That error is a thing of the past. Now they say that he found the germ of his thought in the books of Philo of Alexandria. It is time that this error was buried in the same charnel-house with the bones of the other. St. John's idea of the Word made flesh is conspicuously absent from the pages of Philo-Judæus. He did know something of that revelation of the Word of God in Hebrew Scripture, which—as the Targums witness—was more thoroughly traced

out and believed by the devout Jews of his time than, to our shame and loss, it is now; but Philo would not follow that revelation where it passed into a prophecy of the man Christ Jesus. He was a mystic to whom the history of Israel was allegory; and he did not share in the belief of his countrymen in the Messiah as a man. Philo was a Deist; and by logical consequence his belief in the Messiah, (if he can be said to have had any,) was of ghostlike unreality.

It is common to all who thus seek for the germ of St. John's idea, that they will not see that he is *stating facts*, not setting forth *opinions*. If there must be a question here, it should be, Whence did he get his *facts?* From inspiration, is the answer. But earlier revelation is ever a source of later revelation. The widening and deepening river that makes glad the City of God is one and the same river. St. John's knowledge came to him from the beginning of Scripture. It came to him from beholding in heaven a Man on whose head were many crowns, his vesture dipped in blood, with a name that no one knew but Himself, and *that name was the Word of God.* And his knowledge, to which the Holy Ghost gave all needed completeness of truth, alike in itself and its utterance, came, as he says himself, from what he had seen and heard of the Word of Life. And yet, apart from all these sources of his knowledge, earlier perchance than any of them, the germ of this knowledge in his soul was the fact that his old master, the Baptist, was the Voice foretold; and of this there is evidence in that association of ideas

which led him to bring the Baptist into the midst of his own revelations of the Eternal Word.

Before passing on let it be noted that not only do all the earlier Evangelists mark that John the Baptist bore witness to Christ as the Eternal Word, but that the chief Apostle applied the same prophecy that was the foreordained Cry in the Wilderness to Christ Jesus: "Ye are born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever, and this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you."

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLIER CHAPTERS OF ST. JOHN.

THAT the herald continued to proclaim the Messiah's coming after he knew that Jesus was the Messiah has been perplexing to some; and the more so, because disciples of the Baptist are met with in the Acts some years after his death, and in the East the sect long continued.* All this is said to be irreconcilable with what the earlier Evangelists tell of the baptism of Jesus. It is said to prove that John was never, in his own mind, subordinate to Jesus, that his course was independent, that he was only a reformer and preacher of repentance. But to minds that give any heed to the Evangelists all that gives rise to these infidel conjectures is partially explained by what has been said of the privacy of the Baptism; and, farther, it can be shown that the course of the herald was called for by the state of things in Judea. John was a man exceeding bold; the fire of the desert burned in his veins; yet true courage marches hand in hand with prudence, and John never preached in walled Jerusalem. He was earnest, he was stern,

* This, however, was a general consequence of the Baptist's preaching, no doubt, and is not specially to be attributed to his continuing in his work.

but he had thoughtful delicacy of feeling. He was not sure that Jesus was the Messiah, yet his request to be baptized troubled him, (as it has so many since;) for Jesus had to say to John, "Suffer it to be so." Such a man as John, when he knew that Jesus was the Christ, never went on with his work on his own responsibility, never without consulting with his Lord. The idea (from which our minds can hardly free themselves) that the signs at the baptism were visible to all, makes the course of our Lord and of the Baptist different from what we should think; yet, when the whole state of the case is known, it is plain that it could hardly have been other than that which is described. The ministry of the Baptist was a divine intimation that the ministry of the Messiah was nigh; and the veiling of the signs at the consecration of Jesus to his work was a divine intimation that the full time of His ministry had not come. The Baptist's insight into the perils of the time was such that the question must have arisen whether Judea was a safe field for Jesus. St. Matthew at once, and more clearly than the other Evangelists, discloses the evil state of things; yet St. John accords with St. Matthew. In his Gospel the Baptist tells the emissaries of the Sanhedrim that the Messiah was then in the multitude around him; that he would not hide. That far he went, but they knew he would go no further; for even those "priests and Levites sent from Jerusalem" dared not ask him who the Messiah was. They knew the Prophet would not tell them. The near future justified the Prophet. The Roman

power was some protection, yet even from the beginning Jesus was in danger from the ecclesiastics of Judea. His life was nowhere safe in that province, not even in the throng of the Baptist's adherents in the wilderness. The proclamation that the Messiah was coming at once aroused a wrath in Pharisee and Sadducee that never slumbered nor slept till John and Jesus were murdered, nor then, nor now!

The Son of God was truly man. No miracle taught him to speak or to read. He was not raised above care and danger. He was not free from fatigue of body; when tired he sat on Samaria's well; and he was not always free from care of mind. Hard duties were laid upon him, and he had to find out what they were. He had to find his path, as men find theirs; by the use of all his faculties; by watching the hintings and guidings of providence, by searching the Scriptures, by fervent prayer. God makes no mistakes, and his Son made none. He found the path of his duty as no man ever found it. He never mistook it; he ever walked in it; but man will never know the earnestness with which he sought and found and did his duty. Musing at St. Helena, Napoleon said of Christ Jesus, "In the power of his will I feel the power that created the world."

The finer fabrics of human skill bear no painful trace of the designer's difficult thought or of the workman's hard toil. What is well and completely done seems in the retrospect to have been easily done. The beauty of the life of Jesus veils and

hides its labor and pain. *It is written*, that he learned by what he suffered. He knew what was in man as no other has ever known; yet he no more dispensed with prudent forethought than with food and sleep.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The Pharisees' hatred of holiness was the root of their hatred toward Jesus; yet the Pharisees thought they were pious, and the people were under the same delusion. They kept times and seasons, paid tithes, and made long prayers. How came it, then, that the Pharisees more than others were the deadly enemies of Christ Jesus? How came it that in what they did against Christ Jesus they thought they were doing God service—as afterward one of them thought when consenting to the murder of St. Stephen? The Pharisees were about six thousand in number; the Sadducees were less numerous, but with both are to be numbered their families, dependents, and servants. The two sects formed the ruling class in Judea; all the political power the Romans left to the Jews was in their hands. The two rival sects combined the power of a hierarchy with that of an aristocracy. They had the ideas and aims that are common to all aristocracies; the Pharisees were more prone to court the people, yet Pharisees and Sadducees, openly or secretly, worked together in upholding their common power. The Herodians were the Bonapartists of that time; they looked back to Herod and forward to what did come, when Agrippa regained his grandfather's throne. There was in Judea

a larger class that was distinct from the noblesse;* yet in Judea, as every-where else, the nation was represented by, and in a manner identified with, the governing class.

Christ was rejected by the people through the misrepresentations, solicitations, and maneuvering of their rulers; yet in this the people sinned. But after his Resurrection, though his reappearing was for a short time, to a small circle, and his kingdom was then seen to be not of this world, many of the people and some of the nobles believed. That they believed in Jesus then accords with his own declaration that his Death and Resurrection was the great sign of his Messiahship. Had it not been for that belief, our Lord's claim to be the Messiah would have been so rejected by his own countrymen as to be an almost unanswerable argument against that claim. There was no such rejection. In his own day and generation there were enough of his own countrymen (even those men and women who spread his Gospel throughout the world) to bear sufficient testimony that he was the Messiah whom their prophets foretold.

Still, the condemnation of Christ to death was a national crime. The nobles presented the question suddenly to the people, they left them no time for reflection, but they did persuade them to reject Jesus; and the common outcries of them all drove the Roman Governor to order His crucifixion.

* In the earlier Gospels these classes are quite distinct, and so, too, in the last, though in that Gospel, written after the ruin of the nation, they are all spoken of as the Jews.

Caiaphas was high-priest that year; he was a Sadducee, and then, as for sometime before and afterward, the office of high-priest was in the hands of a powerful Sadducean family. But in all the Gospels the Pharisees are the earliest, the most bitter, and for a time the only active enemies of Jesus; they seek for, they contrive, and they bring about His death. It was *their* work, although they secured his arrest and his crucifixion at the hands of the Romans through the powerful and ready aid of the Sadducees, and with the assent of the Herodians and of the people.

The inquiry, then, into the causes of the danger that was ever near the Messiah in Judea—causes other than the sinfulness common to man—is an inquiry into the causes of the hatred of the governing class in Judea toward Jesus. In the eyes of those aristocrats their welfare was bound up with the established order of things. They could see no change that would benefit themselves. To them the Messiah's coming was the unphilosophic illusion of uncultured people. They had no faith in the Christ, but they had faith in the fortune of Rome. They feared that the belief of the people in the Messiah would lead to rebellion, and they measured too well the Roman strength to believe in the success of that rebellion. In such a war they knew they would lose their power. They loved power even more than they loved money, and in that war they would lose both. They took no pay for their religious ministrations—as the nobles and gentry who sit in the House of Lords or Commons take none

for their services—yet through their ministrations they gained and kept the favor and the reverence of the people, reached their whole life, controlled their affairs, and held all the offices. Thus indirectly wealth came to them from religion, which was their trade, and woe to him who endangered their trade. For spiritual blessings they cared little, and believed little in them, though they were full of the proselyting zeal that is common with those with whom the forms of religion take the place of the realities of religion. They studied the laws of Moses for their own ends; they enforced, they redoubled his requirements with a zeal that was equal to their selfishness. A revival of religion, such as the Baptist preached, would run into political changes, and from a love of their own interests, which they mistook for a sense of duty, they were opposed to all changes. Whatever flashes of light, whatever convictions of sin, smote them in their course toward Jesus, they thought they were doing right. Selfishness took on the guise of patriotism, and patriotism took on the guise of religion. To them reform meant ruin. Their ruin was the ruin of Church and State. Without them the Church and the State would have no stability or grace, for they were the Church and they were the State. All aristocracies hate those who endanger their power; but all there has elsewhere been of that hate is a shadow compared with the hatred with which the religious and political aristocracy of the Jews sought the lives of the murdered Baptist and of the crucified Son of Man. Yet at times they seemed to

have been haunted by a presentiment of the ruin their vengeance would bring upon themselves, and in their near judgment their Church and State perished, and they perished with them.

The preaching of the Baptist aroused the watchful jealousy of the Pharisees, and even without this stimulus, such was the state of things that the ministry of Jesus in Judea would have been a perilous one. In His life some outshinings of his omniscience witnessed to his true divinity; yet he did not avail himself of his omniscience in lieu of his human foresight. Murder haunted his footsteps from Nazareth to Calvary, yet he guarded against danger (for the most part at least) by prudence and forethought. Growing to manhood and living in Galilee, He had small means of judging of the fitness or unfitness of Jerusalem and Judea to become the chief field of his ministry. He had to test that; and while the continuing proclamation of his Herald kept the common eye fixed upon the Baptist, there was a comparatively safe opportunity for Jesus to make the test which he made in that part of his life omitted by the other Evangelists, and described in the first four chapters of St. John.

In some real and true sense the ministry of the Redeemer was ever going on from the hour of consecration at his baptism;* still it is a question on the answer to which, at one important point, de-

* Of the forty days only the supernatural is made known; yet it seems probable that in his meditations in the solitude of the desert the principles that were to guide his course were fixed before his decisions were tested.

pends the harmony of the earlier Gospels and the last Gospel—Was there any moment before the imprisonment of John that, in every respect, answers to the idea that it was the beginning of the fullness of His public ministry? Such was the privacy of *the baptism* that it does not perfectly answer to the idea of that beginning; neither does *the temptation* in the solitude of the wilderness. It only remains to consider whether the course of events described only by St. John fully answers to it; and I think that in those events, and in the way in which they are told, we shall find evidence that they were preparatory to the fullness of our Lord's ministry, which, in the other Gospels, dates from the Baptist's imprisonment.

When the Messiah came up out of the desert he began at once to provide for a witness to himself; but that calling of Simon, John, Andrew, Philip, and Nathanael, though an official act, was hardly a public one. Jesus there began to form his band of disciples, but its organization was afterward completed in Galilee, where a later and more emphatic summons was the true beginning of the discipleship.

Sent for, no doubt, by his mother, and attended by the five, (whom St. John naturally speaks of then as disciples,) Jesus came to a gathering of his family at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. The family, as truly as the Church or the State, is ordained of God, with inviolable rights and holy ministrations of its own. The presence of the Lord at that wedding was the Messianic reconsecration of the family. There our Lord wrought his first miracle; but,

though it has peculiar glories, it was *a household miracle;* it was wrought in and for a family; it was long before it was made known in the written Gospel; and, therefore, the mind is left free to seek for some other hour as that of the fullness of our Lord's ministry.

From Cana He soon went up to Jerusalem, and there he cleansed the unholy Temple. No act more public, few more significant! It was well remembered, and His words rankled in the hearts of those who heard them till they wrought mightily toward his own death. Yet the cleansing of the Temple, I hardly know why, has not impressed me —I do not know that it has impressed any one— as that full beginning of our Lord's ministry that makes all other beginnings preparatory to itself. But I do see it was not the manifestation of the Messiah then, that it is now. In the Man before them no astonished priest or citizen then recognized that Child whom long years before the Magi came from the Far-East to find. That Child was murdered with the boys of Bethlehem! The other signs at the birth of Jesus had been hidden away in the hearts of the pious few who witnessed them, or of the few to whom they could be safely told; for the birth of an heir to the throne of David was a dangerous secret. Of those few the old were dead. A quarter of a century had gone, and much had come between. The cry of the Baptist was heard in the land, but there was nothing to connect his proclamation with this Stranger. His act, then, was not so rash as it seems. Outbreaks of religious

zeal are common in the East; and this deed was done before the rulers knew it. The Pharisees made popularity a profession, and there was something in the deed that would please the people, one of whom the Stranger seemed to be. What our Lord did was of less public consequence at the time than it seems to us now, and it hardly answers to the idea of the true beginning of His public ministry.

Still it was an assertion of sovereignty over the Temple which should have prevented any one from saying that our Lord gradually formed an idea of his mission, changing and enlarging it as time went on. This fatal error is forbidden by His words in the Temple while yet a youth obedient to his parents, and again by what is recorded here. Though He was then looking into the way of carrying out his mission, it proves that in his own mind he had determined what his mission was; and the reason for the act itself may, in part, have been, that no reasonable doubt on that point should ever arise. It stands out almost in the way of contrast to the course of events in which it occurred. Still it does not destroy its tentative preparatory character. There is nothing of that color in any thing that is told of the life of Christ after the imprisonment of John, and there is something of that color in all that came before it.

I do not think that Nicodemus for his own sake feared to come to Jesus *by day*, but because that what our Lord did and said in the Temple had aroused a feeling in the strong men of Jerusalem that would have been perilous to the Stranger, but

for his seeming insignificance and loneliness. The Jewish ruler does not speak as if he were ashamed of coming; and had he come by night from cowardice he would not have been welcome, for cowards are not wanted in the kingdom of heaven.

This nobleman speaks of miracles wrought at that time: "No man can do *these miracles which Thou doest* except God be with him." St. John beheld those miracles, but he does not describe one of them. Now, we are studying writings of artless simplicity yet of unfathomed mental power, in whose pages there are plain indications of careful thought as to all that is written, signs of an intelligence in the selection, arrangement, and utterance of his facts, that ever more and more is disclosing itself, yet is not fully known to any man living, and for generations, and it may be forever, will be more and more visible. This is the writing of so great a master of history that no other save his colleague, St. Matthew, is to be named with him; and any one looking at what is here written must see that St. John would have altered the whole coloring of this course of events if he had described a single one of those miracles as minutely as he afterward described that of the beggar blind from his birth. And, further, it agrees with the view that has been taken of this course of events, that when St. John says that "many believed on his name when they saw the miracles which he did," he goes on to say, "but Jesus did not commit himself unto them."

Out from walled and guarded Jerusalem Jesus went into the open country. There He "tarried,

all men came unto him," and his disciples baptized. Now, if all these things—the cleansing of the temple, miracles in the city, the gathering in the country—did not constitute a full beginning of Christ's ministry, what could? There is force in the question; but the doings of the heir-apparent to a vacant throne are of kingly significance and of public moment before he becomes, at his coronation, in the full sense, a king. The continuing of the Herald to proclaim the coming of the King, forbids the otherwise certain inference from this train of facts; and it is some confirmation of this that up to this time the disciples of Jesus baptized, but in our Lord's full ministry they never baptized.

We come now to almost the last of the facts that bear on the question, whose answer we have been so long journeying to find—following the winding road, and turning into other paths. "John was baptizing near to Salim, because there was much water there, *for John was not yet cast into prison.* The Evangelists were not writers by profession, and what they say to clear up things is sometimes thrown in so abruptly and so briefly as of itself to need clearing up. Here it looks as if one stupid scribe wrote that last line in the margin of his copy and another let it slip into the text; for if John was baptizing, it seems needless to say that he was out of prison; but for that line there is a good reason. The verse before states *a fact*, this one gives *a date*, and it is natural to suppose that just here the need of that date occurring to St. John, he named it in the quick way that he would have done in conver-

sation. As the date of the Fullness of the Ministry given in the other Gospels, it was well known to all the Christian congregation—hence St. John's brief way of speaking; and his recognition of it gives to all he before related its true character of a preparation for that epoch.

The Baptist's last testimony follows that line almost immediately. A Jew set on his disciples to make the Baptist jealous by telling him of the crowds that came to Jesus; a way of working mischief that never would have been thought of had our Lord's course of action up to that time clearly brought out the breadth of the difference between Himself and the Baptist. Surely John could not but have known that of which his disciples spoke to him, and it was hardly a temptation to one to whom Christ Jesus had been revealed as "the Word made flesh;" yet such is the frailty of man that the quietude, the humility, the meek unselfishness with which he answered his disciples is truly touching in a man of so fiery and high a nature; and it may have been that because of this victory over himself in that good hour the Spirit of God so touched his soul that his utterance became one of the marvels of prophecy. Then was the glory of the Eternal Word so revealed that many believe that the witness of the inspired Apostle here joins with that of the Baptist; and when the soul of the Baptist's aged disciple stirred within him as he gave more than wonted power to the words of his old Master by writing them out, he may have carried on their line of thought. If he did, he also spake

as he was moved by the Holy Ghost—but in the months at Ænon John was near to Jesus; he had time for communion with his Lord; and as the Lord made such revelations to the Jewish ruler, what may he not have revealed to the son of his mother's kinswoman, to the child of Elisabeth, born in a prophetic hour, and, perhaps, more to him than any other man!

In his last testimony to Christ Jesus, just before his imprisonment, the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease;" and though there is nothing decisive in the words, yet they do sound as if he had a presentiment of the near close of his own ministry and of the Fullness of the Ministry of his Lord.

I find that the last Evangelist does not give the same reason for our Lord's departure from Galilee that the others give; still his reason does not clash with theirs; it is additional, and rounds out the harmony of the earliest and of the last Gospel as to the evil of those days. Some one (we know not whom—Nicodemus, possibly, or one of those for whom the unrecorded miracles were wrought in Jerusalem) sent to Jesus a word of warning; and when he knew that the Pharisees had heard that his following outnumbered that of the Baptist He left the province of Judea.

The hatred of the Pharisees for the Baptist, seen in this warning, looks a little as if they had something to do with his imprisonment; but St. Matthew and St. Mark give, as the cause, his rebuke of Herod for marrying his brother Philip's wife.

Josephus says that John was put to death because Herod feared his influence with the people; yet the history is consistent. It is rather strange that the Tyrant for awhile "heard John gladly, and did many things" at his bidding; but Oriental rulers (and all who have mastered the art of ruling) give a politic show of honor to those whom the people "count as prophets." Herod Antipas was a tiger's cub, but he had the craft of the fox. The honest Preacher thought too well of the man; and yet there was dramatic propriety in his rebuke of the wantonness of Herod. The fire of the old Prophets kindled up as it went out forever. The last of that king-defying race spoke out as bold as any. He made a deadly enemy of the woman the king lived with; but her wrath was not the sole reason for his laying hands on John. It was one reason, and it was politic for the king to give it out as the only one, for then some would say the Preacher had meddled with what was no concern of his, and the people would resent his fate less than if its cause had been a political one. The familiarity of Josephus with the Herodian princes made it inconvenient to give all of Herod's reasons, but he is right as to the one he does give. The Reformer's popularity troubled the tyrant. The gatherings to his field-preaching and his proclamation of the Messiah's coming were dangerous. Herod felt this, but it was his nature to drift. His fear of the people tended to make him lay hands on the Preacher, and also to let him alone. He was curious to see him, he wished to get him in his power,

and he sent for the holy man. He felt his goodness, he was moved by his eloquence, and he listened with patronizing condescension. But there was no real conviction of sin in his languid nature. In sudden anger he took the first step toward making way with the Preacher, but he was not old Herod's son if he did not think of it before. The drunken revel, the dancing Herodias, and her Jezebel of a mother made his crime a public one; but if things had not been as they were the murder would have come—a prison is but a prophet's resting-place on his way to the grave.

The Evangelists were not likely to have known of Herod's secret motives. Herod needed no prompting of the Pharisees; but they feared, hated, and watched the Preacher, and the warning sent to Jesus rather looks as if they had something to do with the fate of the Baptist; but if they had, it was one of their dark secrets, and suspicion of it, at the time, was hindered by the apparent reasons for the imprisonment and murder. Tidings of the favor of Jesus with the people smote the Pharisees just when they learned that the Reformer would trouble them no more, (for they knew he would never come out of his prison alive.) In their exulting they heard there was more danger from Jesus than there had been from John. At such a moment, in such a mood, they may have planned a like fate for him. Whatever their evil design, it was known to some one, who sent Jesus a word of warning, and his instant flight shows the warning was timely and sure. Here, for the moment, the two elect Evangelists

are on common ground, but the warning is named only by St. John. He may have seen the runner who brought it; he could not forget it, for he fled with his Master. Far to the north, St. Matthew was busy, that day, in the custom-house, and could not have heard of the warning until afterward: and had he spoken of it, it might have seemed that the course of Jesus was determined by it, rather than by general reasons. Yet the stronger reason—the imprisonment of John—given by the earliest Evangelists for our Lord's quitting Judea agrees with the immediate reason given by the last Evangelist. Having their Gospels before him, St. John cleared up what was not entirely clear in them (since Herod's anger with the Baptist did not directly imperil Jesus, and in Galilee He was within his dominions) by recording the warning, which shows that such a crisis had come that Jesus could no longer safely stay in Judea.

Again, by way of clearing up things, St. John throws in a line, "He must needs go through Samaria," which soon becomes more clear when we are told that "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." The former line emphasizes the urgency of the flight. Jesus shunned the more common road across the river, which his enemies would think he had taken when they missed him, and went through the alien land. But His peril was not on his journey only. The danger was so nigh that He had no time, before starting, to procure the food that Syrian travelers must needs take with them.

There was, then, a dark background of dangers past to the scene, when, wearied with His journey, Jesus sat on the well of Samaria and his disciples were gone to buy meat. What then took place passes my limits; yet as what preceded throws some light upon it, it may be permitted to include it within them, though I see but as in a glass darkly the verisimilitude of that scene, and cannot hope to make what is only partially clear to myself wholly so to others. What is told is barely within the elastic bounds of possibility, and were it not for that little-noticed word of warning its verisimilitude might baffle us wholly.

How could that announcement of our Lord's Messiahship, never before made in terms so clear, have been made to that woman? The credence she gave to it goes far to show its wisdom; but then, again, hardly less strange than His confiding, is that faith of hers! His insight into the secrets of her life carried with it (as in the case of Nathanael) a peculiar power to convince; yet how many beheld great miracles of the Lord and did not believe! And then the guise in which He came! That tired-out traveler on foot, unarmed and unattended by any royal company, hardly seemed a king!

There have been ages (as their images and pictures show) when it was thought there was no comeliness in the person of Jesus, but the majesty of his presence was never doubted. Once it struck fear into the hearts of his own Disciples; once his enemies fell to the ground before it; and there may,

there must, have been something of unearthly majesty in his look when he told the woman who He was. That he told this to her is passing strange! but deep is the mystery of human utterance! The soul has its own times of speech and its own times of silence. The moments come when a man must speak, and moments come (as when Herod questioned Jesus) when a man will not speak though he die! The course of the Son of God, pre-ordained before the foundation of the world, had hardly begun, yet he was a hunted fugitive from the city and house of his Father! He had taken refuge in Samaria, and his soul was stirred in no common way when there, by Jacob's well, he heard the woman's belief in the Messiah. Better than all others Christ knew the heart. She felt his truthfulness, and He knew that her heart was better than her life. Her own hard lot, the sin and misery of the weary world, had not driven her, as they have so many, to curse God and die. The very evil of the world had led her to hope for an intervention of God. She had been told that in his own good time He would straighten the world out, and this seemed to ner so needful to be done and so God-like to do, that she was sure that He would. Her words were no echo of the heartless talk of her time—had they been they would never have brought forth the response they did. There were few, even in Israel, in whom desire had so passed into hope and hope into assurance. To such a woman, at such a time, it is not strange that the Messiah said, "I that speak unto you am He." It is not so strange as that the

words could not then have been safely said in the Holy City! Many strange things are true, and many strange things bring with them their own evidence. Such an interview it were impossible to have imagined. It is hard to bring it even within the bounds of possibility! but these are self-authenticating words of the Son of God: "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; *for the Father seeketh such to worship him.* God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

CHAPTER IV.

ST. JOHN AND THE EARLIER GOSPELS.

NATHANAEL'S confession, "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel," * which, doubtless, uttered the feeling of Peter, Andrew, James, and John, has been said to be at variance with the lower tone of the faith of the Disciples after a longer and larger knowledge of Jesus; yet how natural their feeling at that great hour of their lives! Like all around them, they were wondering whether the Baptist himself were not the Messiah; he pointed them to "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." What Jesus said to Nathanael and to the others confirmed the words of the Baptist, and for the moment they fully believed. The first lighting up of faith, as of love, is with a vividness that afterward sinks and wavers, though, if it be a true light, it lives on till it burns with a steady flame. The earlier brightness, then, of the sudden light and its deadening for a time are true to human nature. The quickening of a seed is always a contrast to its slow and difficult growth, which, checked in some ways and carried forward in others, at last makes

* Given only by St. John. See chap. iii, 29–50.

the plant become what the vanishing prophecy in its quickening foretold.

All that is needed to give probability to so early a Confession of our Lord's Divinity is a clear insight into the belief of the spiritual in Israel concerning the Messiah; but much of all that has been written about the Jewish idea of the Messiah has utterly failed to mark that faith of the true Israel which was uttered in Nathanael's cry, "Thou art the Son of God!" That faith of the Disciples was afterward perplexed by the mystery of the two natures in Christ; but this would hardly make a semblance of a variance here were it not further said that the earlier Evangelists know nothing of the earlier call, and St. John knows nothing of the later call. This disingenuous special pleading begs the question. That they do not give the earlier call, and that he does not give the later one, is explained by the construction of their Gospels, for they begin with the Full Ministry, and St. John with a train of events preparing for that Ministry.

It is further said that two calls are *unhistorical*, and one or the other must be given up; yet if a single look and word had made them leave all, this would have been denied as miraculous by those who now deny the more human course of events. And *unhistorical*, the talismanic word with these critics, is here brought in *as usual;* for those intelligent of affairs know that if their calling was not wholly a miraculous one, there were several stages in the gathering of the Disciples before they left all, to go with the Nazarene.

In his retrospect of the experience of the Disciples St. John recalls the sifting and testing moment* after the Discourse in the Synagogue at Capernaum, when "many went back and walked no more with Jesus." The Confession of our Lord's Divinity then made by all of the Twelve goes as far as the later Confession at Cæsarea Philippi, for our Lord then said to them all, "Will ye also go away?" and Simon Peter answered for them all: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." But honest and true words may be spoken with so much more of intelligence and depth of feeling at one time than another as not to be the same. It is needless to say this to people of common observation; yet there is a need of it which justifies my having said that it is humiliating to contend with some of the criticism of the Holy Gospels that comes from the highest seats in the synagogue of criticism, for there are some who take the Confession recorded by St. John to be the Great Confession made at Cæsarea Philippi. I will not go into reasons that should be apparent to every one why time, place, and subsequent events forbid this error, but content myself with marking (what one late effort † to confound the two does not notice at all)

*See John vi, 60–71, and compare Matt. xvi, 16.

† Dr. Bernhard Weiss, on "The Day at Cæsarea Philippi," in the "Princeton Review," January, 1879. This article, in other respects worthless, is of painful interest as showing how at this present instant German scholarship, even of a sanctimonious kind, trifles with the Gospels. This will appear from a few of the notions scat-

how our Lord received the earlier Confession. I need not recall to my readers the joy with which He hailed the Confession at Cæsarea Philippi; it was utterly unlike the feeling with which he heard the earlier Confession. "Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Difficult questions can be raised as to this answer — it is often so with what is said at moments when great interests are at stake—but the difference in our Lord's feelings, when he rejected the earlier Confession and when he heard the acceptable one at Cæsarea Philippi, is so plain that in the attempt to confound the two the gates of hell cannot prevail.

Of all the general or special efforts to discredit the Holy Gospels few are as effective as the aver-

tered here and there throughout this elaborate affectation of research. The writer of what is known as Matthew's Gospel used St. Mark's as the groundwork of a Life of Christ, he also had an old apostolic document with a rich store of sayings, fragments of which appear, and also in the third Gospel. Later utterances have probably been added. The Confession at Cæsarea Philippi is made up in part out of some things brought forward from chap. xi, 25, and anticipated from chap. xviii, 18. It is, however, a recasting from the old document, for the speaking of Simon Barjona indicates the Aramaic foundation of his authority. [It merely indicates St. Matthew's own Aramaic Gospel, translated by him into Greek.] There is more of this dream-talk, (though nothing that is really new,) such as fancying the miracles of the feeding of the Five Thousand and of the Four Thousand may be the same miracle twice told in different ways. The opinions of such a mind can be right only by accident; and how consistent they are is seen when having asserted his "unshaken confidence in the genuineness of St. John's Gospel," he afterward says, "St. John can make less claim than the others to complete and literal exactness," and thinks that he touched up and colored some of St. Peter's words.

ment of a variance between the portraiture of the Lord in the earlier Gospels and the last. Two of the facts given as evidence of this variance—the style and manner of our Lord's teaching in some of the chapters of the last Gospel, and that there are no parables in that Gospel—have been admitted and explained; but the weightier part of the evidence of the charge is in the assertion that the earlier Evangelists know not the truth with which St. John opens his Gospel, or, as one of the orthodox cautiously puts it, "had no well-defined idea of the nature of Christ." In some sense that is true, for the nature of Christ is a mystery that is beyond comprehension. No one would have been more quick to own this than St. John, for he beheld in heaven One who had a name written that no one knew but He himself, and his name was *the Word of God.* But that his idea of the Eternal Glory of Christ was at variance with that of the other Evangelists has already been disproved by the way he brings the Baptist into the prelude to his Gospel as a witness to what is there revealed. That error could not do the harm it does were it not for the tendency even of orthodox scholarship to underestimate the intelligence of the Holy Evangelists; but surely the Evangelists ought to be presumed to know, surely they did know, all the bearings of what they wrote much better than their critics. St. Matthew closes his Gospel with truth in harmony with that with which St. John opens his; he also puts that truth in the forefront of his Gospel when he cites the prophecy that the name of the

child of the Holy Virgin shall be Emmanuel—God with us. St. Matthew did not mean that Emmanuel would be one of the names of Christ Jesus, as he might have meant had he written that line in modern days. Both the Prophet Isaiah and the Evangelist had ideas as to names, which (though frequently appearing in the Scriptures) are now but little understood. In the beginning, the naming of things animate or inanimate tasked the thought of man, and it is commemorated in the Sacred Records. The primal sense of each name for things (a sense now for the most part forgotten) tried to sum up as far as could be done in a word all that was known of its nature.* The Hebrews remembered the original significance of naming, and the Prophet never thought of the name Emmanuel in the way we now think of a name. In no such way was the prophecy ever fulfilled. It was not a name for Jesus in the Holy Family. He was never known by that name, and the Prophet never thought he would be. St. Matthew, who never heard his Master called so, understood the prophecy as the Prophet meant it should be understood, and as it has always been understood by the Christian congregation.

The general sense—far wiser as to the intent and meaning of Scripture than the scholastic mind—has

* Related to this subject are the names of the Hebrews. In "The Divine Human" Dr. Tayler Lewis wrought out an *original* argument for the truth of the Sacred Records from the recurrence in them of pious names given in a spirit of faith or prophecy. For this branch of the subject see Gen. v, 29; xvi, 11; xxvii, 36; Exod. xviii, 3, 4; 1 Sam. xxv, 25, with other scriptures, and, especially, compare Gen. v, 2, with Matt. i, 21.

seized firm hold of the thought of the Prophet, and uses that name only as descriptive of the Divine Nature of Him who was born of the holy Virgin. It uses that name, Emmanuel, only in lyric outbursts of devotion. But the Christian heart has thus seized firm hold of the sense of the prophecy, more through the analogy of Scripture and fine sympathy with the truth, than through any thought of that Hebrew idea of the significance of naming, which often lights up Scripture with new light, as in the case just cited from the vision of St. John.

To begin to apprehend the fullness and depth of the intelligence of the holy Evangelists, is to harmonize the revelation of the Being of the Lord in the earliest and in the last Gospels. Illustrations of this might be multiplied; its importance should be insisted upon—but I have to leave this line of thought with merely asking, What idea of the nature of Christ Jesus a man of St. Matthew's intellect must have received from what the angel said to St. Joseph—*He shall save his people from their sins?*

Were we to give up our minds for the moment to that criticism of the Gospel of St. John which says it exalts Christ Jesus to a height which it did not enter into the minds of his brother Apostles to conceive of, and were then to read his Gospel for ourselves, we should be amazed to find the human nature of Christ there brought out (if that were possible) even more touchingly and forcibly than in the earlier Gospels—as at the well of Samaria or at the grave of Lazarus. We should find that the Gospel, said to give an idea of the glory of Christ

Jesus so transcending that in the other Gospels as to be at variance with it, brings out his divine nature—and truly this is a marvel—by laying an emphasis on his human nature. In this the secret of St. John's method, like that of the color of the Old Masters, eludes us. It could be seized only by a man of the historic power of St. John, and the world-time may run out before such a man is born: yet this is plain—the effect comes in part from the conviction of the witness, that whatever is seen or heard of Jesus reveals "the Eternal Life that was with the Father." St. John's conviction of that is so sincere, that having declared the fullness of the glory of Christ Jesus in the wonderful prelude to his Gospel, he does not go on to prolong and uphold that high note, by the voice from heaven at the Baptism, nor by the glory of his Transfiguration—great signs, of which St. Matthew tells—but he goes on to give a talk with a Jew by night, with a Samaritan woman at a well! The revelations of the Divinity of Christ that from the opening of his Evangel we hoped for, do indeed come, but not in the guise we thought of! We look for marvels, we find these things and are content! Truly John was of great faith, for, beginning his Gospel as he did, he feared not to go on with it thus! And truly Jesus was the Son of God, truly his life breathed of Divinity in every act and word, when such comparatively human and humble moments are so in harmony with the opening of the last Gospel!

Long before St. John wrote the other Gospels were given, and after what they had revealed of the

birth, the death, and the resurrection, St. John could at once say, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He became flesh, and dwelt among us." After what the whole congregation had been told of Jesus, their knowledge was in harmony with those words. St. John felt this, or he never could have begun as he did. His utterance is not that of one who is saying something so new, so unexpected, that it must surprise, startle, and confuse; it is that of one speaking to those in intelligent sympathy with himself. What then becomes of the pretense that the revelations of the glory of Jesus in the Gospel of St. John are at variance with those in the earlier Gospels?

In that part of the life of our Lord described only by St. John, the human element of prudence comes out more fully than in the earlier Gospels. In the latter his ministry opens with no appearance of the forethought* that goes with well-ordered human affairs. In those Gospels the course of Jesus at its beginning seems raised above the needs and appliances of mortal wisdom. It was ordained that his people should thus have their first idea of Jesus as *sent from God;* and this is ever their first idea, because the Gospels are read in the order in which they were written; his Church by keeping them in their time-order ever perpetuating the teaching thus inwrought into their construction. Those Gospels

* Save, perchance, such as may be thought to pertain to his meditations in the desert; but that is a matter of conjecture; concerning it there is nothing directly revealed.

could not so decisively have given that true impression, had they not passed over the events in the life of Jesus from the Temptation to the imprisonment of John; for (as we have seen) there was in them something of a tentative and preparatory character. From the course of events described by St. John, we learn something more than we are told by St. Matthew and the others, of the wisdom with which Jesus went on his way amid the complications, difficulties, and dangers of his human estate. Here, for the moment, the Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. John, exchange characters; in the later Gospel our Lord enters upon his labors with more of the thoughtful caution befitting the Son of Man, in the earlier Gospel with more of the instant direct action of the Son of God!

Let us now mark another divinely ordained relation between the construction of the three earlier Gospels and the last, that is of far greater moment. On comparing the two apostolic Gospels, we were struck with St. Matthew's having passed over the life of our Lord from the Temptation until the imprisonment. The same course is taken by St. Mark and also by St. Luke. Neither of them speak of the Saviour's going up to Jerusalem until he went there to die. We have again and again considered the several reasons for this on its human side; now let us reverently mark, as its only sufficient, highest, and true reason, the ordaining will of God that, by this construction of the Gospels of his Son, the proper place should be given to the Sacrifice on Calvary. For this structure and sequence of the

Gospels (though its *reason* has been little understood, and so has been little thought of) is by no means the least effectual of all the many ways in which the Bible gives to the Atonement its true place as the great central fact of Revelation.

The Church of Christ has ever felt, and will ever feel, that, in some true sense, there was but one going up to Jerusalem; and such was the feeling of the Saviour himself. This feeling comes out in a conversation with his brothers.* Taunting and tempting the Saviour, his brethren counseled him to go with the caravan of his enthusiastic followers that was about to move on from Galilee going up to the Feast of Tabernacles, and to "show himself openly" as the Messiah. They would then have had Him do what he afterward did when he entered Jerusalem in triumph—if triumph that funereal procession can be called which he knew was leading on to his death on the cross. His brethren did not believe in Him; their spirit was a mocking one; yet they were curious to see what would come, and were ready to turn the event, if possible, to their own ends. Our Lord severely rebuked them. He said the world knew its own, and they could safely go up to Jerusalem at any time. He knew their thoughts; he knew the future, unknown to them, and told them his "time" to go up had not come. He answered their thought, and said, "I go not up." They understood that he would not then go

* See John, chap. vii, 1–14. From the words "I go not up *yet* to this feast," (ver. 9,) "yet" should be omitted, according to the best authority.

up in the way they wished; and he did not contradict himself, *as they understood him*, when, a few days after, in a different way from that in which they tempted him to go, he went "as it were in secret." He said, "I go not up," for to him there was *but one going up to Jerusalem.* To that thought, that feeling, that purpose of the Saviour, the will of God conformed the structure of the three earlier Gospels; and the same Will ordained that those Gospels should forever be read before the last. Thus in those three Gospels, His Church—before hearing of those other goings up to Jerusalem that were of less consequence, and on which she looks with different feelings—thrice goes with her Saviour to Calvary in that one going up to Jerusalem to which Christ Jesus ever looked forward as the consummation of that for which he came into the world; *for it is written* that "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life; for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST AND THE SECOND GOSPEL.

WHY the four Gospels? It has been strongly argued that the first was adapted to the Jews, the second to the Romans, the third to the Greeks, and the last to Christians. Only the last statement is correct; for the characteristics of the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans did not so fill out the orb of human nature that, by speaking to each in turn, the truth could address the whole human race. Each of the three earlier Gospels is superior to national peculiarities, and is adapted to sinners of every race and nation; and each of the four Gospels so offers salvation to all the children of men that Greek, Roman, or Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, may be one in Christ.

The Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, were somewhat restricted to the cycle of facts in the oral teaching of the Apostles; and the forms in which they cast their recitals were often molded by the living tradition which they tried to use and did use. Yet they used their own eyes as well as the eyes of others. They told from their own lips what they heard; and, while the great purpose of each of the four Gospels is one and the same, each has a character of its own.

None seriously question that the Gospel of St. John and the "treatises" of St. Luke are the products of individual minds. The evidence of the same fact as to St. Mark's Gospel is convincing, and so also as to the Gospel of St. Matthew. The unique structure of the earliest Gospel is more complicate than that of the others, yet the unity of its organic life is perfect as that of a cedar of Mount Lebanon. And in the end all infidel efforts to tear that Gospel to pieces will only result in making that Gospel appreciated intellectually as much as it has been spiritually appreciated.

In each of the holy Gospels the mind of the writer can be traced, and the unity of each Gospel is strong ground from which to repel the attacks that are made upon their authorship. The unity of the whole Gospel is one of the many impregnable grounds from which to repel the assaults that are made upon the whole Gospel. Upon this ground we have already entered; and we are now further to consider some of those correspondencies and affinities of the Gospels which give to the Evangeliad the unity, not of a human work, but of a divine creation.

It might be thought that St. Matthew and St. John would have so divided their joint work that one would have portrayed their Master as the Son of man and the other as the Son of God; but no such vain attempt to treat of the two natures in Christ, apart from each other, could have been thought of by any Evangelist; and yet St. Matthew sets forth Christ Jesus more in his relations with

time, St. John more in his relations with eternity. The genius of St. Matthew was the more historic, that of St. John the more philosophic; and though nothing is more philosophic than St. Matthew's plan, nothing is more historic than the filling out of the plan of St. John. Free scope was given to the genius of St. Matthew by his earlier coming into the field, and to St. John because the other Evangelists wrote before him.

It was given to St. Matthew intelligently to prepare the way for the Gospel of St. John. It was also given to St. Mark and St. Luke to prepare its way; and they did so as well, though they were less conscious of doing so. We learn something of these things from what we learn of the construction and character, the similarities and differences, of their Gospels; and what it was given St. Matthew to do we are now to discover in the only way possible—*by finding out what he did.*

Some knowledge of the time in which Christ Jesus lived is prerequisite to a knowledge of his life on earth; and the earliest Evangelist gives more of this than those who came after him. From St. Mark's Gospel this historic element is, comparatively, absent, evidently because St. Matthew wrote before him, for it was more needed in Rome than in Jerusalem. And as St. Matthew wrote primarily for his own countrymen, to whom such knowledge was common with himself, his giving it as he does shows his large comprehension of what was required of the earliest written Gospel.

The reason why St. Matthew's historic gifts have

not been more appreciated is simply this: he gives "the form and pressure of the time" so quickly and easily that he hardly seems to give it at all. Yet a truer and deeper insight into what was then going on, can be gained from his Gospel than from all the many elaborate treatises on the Jewish civilization at that epoch. From them much may be learned of the two political and religious factions, parties, or sects of the Jews; but in sincerity and depth this knowledge does not compare with that which St. Matthew makes an indestructible part of our own, when the Baptist, seeing the Pharisees and Sadducees, with fierce anger suddenly cries out, "O generation of vipers!" St. Matthew brings our souls into magnetic contact with the vital points of the time when they touch the soul of St. John, for the life of his time throbs in the heart of a great man. Well St. Matthew knew the light he was letting in upon the inevitable course of events through the stern surprise, the withering contempt, of the "*Who hath warned you* to flee from the wrath to come?" From the walled city those hypocrites came out to snare the Preacher in the open country; and through their reception by the Preacher all know—those who spell out the words as well as those who read the Greek—and St. Matthew meant all should know, the wickedness of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Through the Prophet's heart all feel, and St. Matthew meant that all should feel, that there is no good in them. Here the future is in the present, the end is in the beginning! For when the Herald thus flings the gage

of battle down, we know that a deadly fight with the evil powers in the land cannot be put off nor put aside; that the battle is already begun; that there can be neither conciliation, compromise, peace, nor truce; that the war must be an open and bitter war to the end.

St. Matthew so makes us feel what was then going on, that our sense of it is somewhat like our sense of what is now going on in our own world around us, the kind of knowledge we are all the time using in our daily life so readily and so unconsciously, that it seems almost as much a matter of feeling as of thought. Evidences of St. Matthew's historic power are in all he wrote, but I must be content with one more example of it. The threescore years and ten are not long enough to read all the books about the Jews, yet what could be learned by plodding through them all, that is of as much value as what cannot but be learned from one reading of the second chapter of St. Matthew? There the widespread belief in the coming of the King of the Jews, and the prophecy of his birth in Bethlehem, are so fastened in the memory that they never can be forgotten. There the predicted sign of the Messiah's glory is seen in the heavens; there the world-wide preparation for his coming is made known; and the evil heart of the Jews is laid bare when Gentiles, from a land beyond that whence Abraham crossed over the Euphrates, tell that the Messiah is born, and "King Herod is troubled *and all Jerusalem with him.*" Here again St. Matthew binds the end of his Gospel to its beginning; for no wonder that

outside of the gate of that same Jerusalem the King of the Jews was nailed to the cross!

The pioneer Evangelist had to bridge over the years between the older revelation and the new revelation, by proving that Moses and the Prophets had spoken of Christ. Besides this he had to carry on the line of his mission "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," so that what, in the end, was openly to become a mission to the human race, might be seen to have had that breadth of intent from its beginning. As he had to record the relations of Christ to the past, he also had to reveal the relations of Christ to the future; the one by repeating words of ancient prophecy, the other by recalling Christ's own prophetic words, which time would prove to be utterances of Him "by whom the time-worlds were made." All these things St. Matthew had to do, *for all these things he did.*

Wonderful his carrying out of so varied and large a plan in so small a space! Still more wonderful the power that made all there is in his Gospel subordinate and tributary to its revelation of the Saviour! The difference between his Gospel and any and all the fifty lives of Christ written in the last fifty years is incommensurable; it is not a matter of degree but of quality; the power of the Evangelist is of another kind. Some cry out that a miracle cannot be proved by witnesses no longer subject to the questionings of curiosity, gone centuries ago to be forever with the Lord; but St. Matthew's Gospel is a miracle whose evidence abides in itself.

His Gospel prepared the way for the next. That

Gospel only sketched the historic back-ground that St. Matthew had so fully drawn, and it gave but little of the prophetic evidence that St. Matthew had so fully given. There Christ is seen in the singleness of his majesty; and when its likeness of Him was combined with his likeness in the earlier Gospel, then the image of the Lord in the hearts of his people grew more life-like than before.

To the second Gospel we will return, but, leaving it for the present, let us pass to the affinities of the third Gospel with the earliest one. And if we say that the mission of Christ is wider in St. Luke's Gospel, this is at once rebuked by St. Matthew's opening his with the coming of the Magi and closing it with the words, "Go teach all nations." St. Matthew's idea of Christ's mission is as broad as St. Paul's, (even as his idea of Christ is as spiritual as St. John's,) but the earliest Gospel had fully and clearly to give His mission to the Hebrews. St. Matthew gave this once for all—not so that the Evangelists who came after him could wholly pass it over, but so that in St. Luke's later Gospel the reception of the fullness of the idea of the coming of Christ to all nations being less hindered by the idea of his coming to the Jews, St. Luke could present the world-wide view of Christ's mission better than himself. This difference between their Gospels is strikingly marked by St. Matthew's stopping when he had thus far quoted the prophecy of Isaiah concerning John the Baptist, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," while St. Luke

goes on to quote this, "Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, the crooked shall be made straight, the rough ways made smooth, *and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.*" The primitive congregations sharply felt the difference between the two Gospels; it was an element in the discord as to Judaism which called out St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians; but in the course of time the congregation so came to read the earlier Gospel in the light of the later Gospel that it hardly knew how much had been taken away from the force of "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," by the blending in the mind of St. Matthew's Gospel with that of St. Luke.

Along another line a difference may be traced, though more faintly, which further tends to make the third Gospel the complement of the first. There is a tone of solemnity and sadness in the earliest Gospel that borders upon sternness and severity. This was the true historic tone when St. Matthew was dealing with the evil of that evil time; for, having left the malice and murder in the heart of Jerusalem to his colleague St. John, it was only thus that he could make the death of the Lord historically intelligible; and even then the earlier Gospel at this point waits for the last. St. Matthew reveals the diabolism of the time in such a way that the end does not take us by surprise; yet still a searching historical scrutiny finds that, because of the absence of some of the facts related by St. John, the catastrophe comes about in the first Gospel without any very obvious, immediate cause. This

is common to the three earlier Gospels; and in this, their structure is divinely conformed to the mystery of the Atonement; for, even when all the visible links in the chain are supplied by St. John, the death of Christ is not historically intelligible. History knows but inferentially of the Divine or the Satanic. It is not given to history to understand the Agony in the garden and the Death on the cross.

What St. Matthew wrote is pervaded with a sense of the presence and power of the Prince of this world that is beyond human insight. St. Matthew shows nothing of the disposition of Tacitus to darken the shades because it suited his own nature; yet he made it so plain that the desperate wickedness of the nation was ripening for judgment, that this needed not to appear with like fullness in the later Gospels; and hence there is a difference between his tone and St. Luke's. Yet there is no variance between them; for, with even more fullness, St. Luke recites that awful parable of the wicked husbandmen's cool, calculating, money-making treason and murder, where the hard daring of human guilt is represented as passing beyond the foreknowledge of the all-seeing Mind! And the more thorough the comparison of the two Gospels the more the correspondence comes to light. Take, for example, the visit of the angels at the Nativity. The gentle shepherds beheld no merry throng of bright visitants coming down to the earth with songs of cheer. They beheld *the host* of the angels,*

* St. Luke ii, 13: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly *host*." The English term here gives the sense

the army of heaven drawn up in battle array above the manger of the holy Child! Yet throughout, these Gospels preserve each its own characteristics. They stand in their right places in the great year of God's mercy in Christ. In the earlier Gospel there is more of the severity of winter; in the later, there is more of the gladness of spring.

When the three earlier Gospels are taken together, then, the first Gospel is perfect through its relation to the kindred Gospels. They are perfect, not apart from each other, but through a unity that came from the same Spirit, leading each Evangelist to give to his Gospel a character of its own. The same is true of the Gospel of St. John; but what is further to be said of the dependence of the Gospel of the last Evangelist on that of his colleague and of the other two Evangelists must be put off until after we have considered the occasion

of the Greek term. For *host* is used by the masters of our tongue either for an army in battle array or for an army in combat. Byron may be said to define the former use of the word in his line descriptive of the day at Marathon:

> The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career.

Scott uses the word in the other sense, when one of the two squires left to guard the lady on the hill overlooking Flodden Field, seeing Lord Marmion's banner waver in the fight, cries out:

> Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare,
> May say your beads and patter prayer,
> I gallop *to the host.*

In the verse from St. Luke what is in the Greek word is exactly given in the English word; and I cannot but say that I have sometimes heard the attempt made to mend our admirable version of the Scriptures from the Greek, simply because there was not a competent understanding of the force and meaning of the English of the translation.

and motive for St. Mark's Gospel and the origin of St. Luke's.

When I turned from communing with the formative Gospel of St. Matthew to think of how St. Mark must have felt when he read it, it seemed to me as natural as could be, that St. Mark wrote just what he did write. When he read the apostolic Gospel his admiration, his surprise, his wonder, must have been lost in amazement. Yet, as he thought over that marvelous creation, he must have felt strongly impelled to tell over again the things St. Matthew told, just as he had so often heard St. Peter tell them. I think this would be very clear if we could keep what we read in St. Matthew's descriptions apart from what we see in St. Peter's pictures; but the two are so interblended in our memories that we have hardly an idea of how the narratives of the one gain from the touches of the other. But if that becomes fully apparent, then what St. Mark did seems to be the most natural thing in the world. St. Peter's "son" knew his Gospel by heart, and the reading of St. Matthew's brought up to him many things that St. Peter had told him, in such a life-like way, that he almost felt as an eye-witness would. Now, though a story be well told, yet an eye-witness will tell that story all over again; or if told too well for that to be thought of, how sure he is to touch up the picture! The reason of the impulse is not far to seek. Many things are left out by a good story-teller. He seizes upon the strong points, and is dramatic rather than pictorial; for the very highest descriptive tal-

ent knows what to leave out as well as what to put in.

St. Matthew had the rare gift of seeing into, and of bringing to light, the soul of things; but in portraying their bodily form he was not so good. The highest descriptive talent is seldom found in company with that lower excellence. In the latter St. Matthew was not deficient, and in the former he has no superior. My meaning will be clearer if we compare St. Matthew's portrait of the centurion with the almost dramatic scene in St. Luke's Gospel. In the later Gospel there files in the procession of the elders. They proclaim that the centurion had built a synagogue; and to commemorate that good work of a Roman suits as well the spirit of the third Gospel as to tell of the charity of the good Samaritan. Then files in the procession of the friends of the centurion, escorted by himself* with his men at arms. For all that double array of

* Matt. viii, 5–13; Luke vii, 1–10. Of the seeming difference in the two narratives as to the presence of the centurion, the explanation in most comments—*facit per alium facit per se*, what a man does by another he does himself—mistakes the facts. In both Gospels the words are those of the centurion in person. St. Luke says our Lord marveled *at him*. The difficulty is that the centurion sends the elders, sends his friends, but nothing is said of his coming himself. Prof. Sewell changes the translation thus: "The English version uses the word 'sent' in connection with both parties. St. Luke used two different words—*απεστειλεν* in reference to the first party, but *ἐπεμψεν* in reference to the second. The former implies that the sender remained behind; the latter has two meanings, (1,) to send a person under escort, (2,) to escort him. And we find that St. Luke tells us that when Jesus approached the house the centurion called out his soldiers and conducted his friends under an escort."

petitioners there was a reason. The officer was one of those few who, when they want a thing done, take all the means to have it done. And St. Luke's historically instructive description shows that the Roman was not sure the wonder-working Israelite would work a miracle for one of the heathen. To study the religious passions of hostile races was of the Roman military art. The officer knew there were difficulties in the way of Christ's doing what he wished to have done, and he smoothed the way with good sense and tact and Roman energy. He made his personal desire a matter of public concern; and such was the pulse of Israel that we are not sure, if he had not done what he did, that Christ would have wrought the miracle. Certain it is that his forethought in putting forward the elders made the granting of his prayer consist much better with a prudent and wise regard to Christ's immediate purpose in his mission to Israel. St. Matthew knew and appreciated all that as well as St. Luke; but that which touches him is the man. His eye is fastened on the centurion. His soul is fixed on the soul of the centurion, and he so fixes our souls on him that the mind (though we remember and appreciate St. Luke) will no more combine the two descriptions than it will combine two representations of the same event, one in sculpture and one in painting. It chooses to keep St. Matthew's description apart by itself. St. Matthew could not dwarf the centurion by bringing in what no one else could have left out, and what after him St. Luke brought in so well. His thoughts are so with the man that

he has no thought for the elders or for what the elders said. He cannot divide the interest of the centurion's words with those of others. To him the centurion's words need no emphasis from the presence of his men-at-arms, for they breathe the soul of Rome. With true historic instinct he speaks of what he most deeply felt; and the centurion speaks to us, he lives for us as he lived for him, because St. Matthew makes us feel just what he felt. And St. Matthew sees it all through his Master's eyes, feels it all as he felt it, for his Master "marveled at the centurion."

"Lo" and "behold" are St. Matthew's characteristic words. They come in some thirty times, and (with the constant recurrence of the simple connective *then*) have rightly been thought to show the hand of an unpracticed writer, whose artless, child-like ways are not like those of rhetoricians. Yet there is another side to this. Those words are the signs of the one, who in the converse of the Disciples with the Lord never said a word, yet was so wrapt a listener, that when it came to the writing out of what the Lord had said, the Disciples turned to him. For St. Matthew caught up his use of those words from his Master's lips: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, behold," and, "Lo, I am with you alway." And as the quickness of St. Peter's will is felt in his characteristic word *straightway*, so the peculiarity of St. Matthew's nature is felt in his characteristic words. For wisdom is the child of awe and wonder. The soul that is alive to a sense of the unseen and eternal is

ever crying, Lo, and Behold, as it every-where marks in the visible things in time the passing signs of the power and wisdom of God. And, further, on looking into St. Matthew's use of his characteristic words we see that usually they either mark a train of events: "Behold, there came wise men from the East;" or else they call upon the soul rather than the senses: "Behold, certain of the Pharisees said within themselves, This man blasphemeth."

Some argue that the descriptions in the earliest Gospel could not have come from an eye-witness. Such dullness is almost incredible. St. Matthew paints for the mind where others paint for the eye. Where others would have told of what they had seen, he tells of what he felt. Thus the element of personal feeling is as really in his narrative as in theirs, and such description as his is not only personal testimony, but personal testimony of the very highest kind. Yet St. Matthew's genius was more like that of a sculptor than of a painter. And in that pictorial power, but for some lack of which he would not have been the grand witness and great historian that he was, St. Peter excelled him. That gift of St. Peter's comes out in things small and great. With St. Peter things move fast. His characteristic word is *straightway;** it comes in some forty times or more. St. Peter is fond of diminutives; he

* In our version, sometimes translated "forthwith," which is well, sometimes "immediately," which is not so well; and often as this word comes in, it were better always to have rendered it "straightway." See Mark i, 29, 31.

talks of the little fishes, the little dogs that ate the crumbs, the little maid, and even of a little ear.*

St. Peter's words are strong. At the Baptism heaven was "*rent;*" the others say it was *opened.* His word is the one they all use "when the veil of the Temple was rent asunder from the top to the bottom." Some fine descriptive touches are his alone, such as, Jesus sat upon the Mount of Olives, *over against the Temple.* And he alone marks that Caiaphas, before he questioned Christ, "stood up *in the midst*—came down from his high seat into the circle of the members of the Sanhedrim, thus making his act that of the whole court. But, then, St. Matthew also marks that Caiaphas stood up, and of the three Evangelists who record that great moment he alone gives the oath: "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God."

St. Peter has many fine descriptive touches, as that Jesus, "rising up a great while before day, went out into a solitary place, and there prayed." Sometimes his words very naturally tell more than they say: "All the city was gathered together *at the door;*" and again, "It was noised abroad that He was *in the house*, and straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive

* The ear of Malchus, which he smote off with his sword. (Mark xiv, 47.) He may have taken it up at a sign from his Master; yet Peter's eye must have been quick to have marked at such a time that it was a little ear. But the word is used by the other Evangelists, and it may be that while scholars have taken it in a diminutive sense, it is merely a form of the word peculiar to Palestinian Greek.

them, no, not so much as *about the door*." What door? what house? It was Peter's own door, it was Peter's own house, that house in which the Master "took his wife's mother by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them."

But each Gospel has descriptive touches of its own, and some of those in the second Gospel are in the others. If Peter tells that the little maid awakened from the sleep of death was to "have something to eat," so does Luke; and for once Luke becomes the more graphic and minute. In the second Gospel the wretched father beseeches Jesus (just after he came down from the holy mount) to help "my son;" in the third Gospel it is, "my son, my only child." Yet St. Peter alone tells that when the multitude then beheld Jesus "they were greatly amazed." This suggests what was beyond description; and what can it have been but that something of the unearthly light of the Transfiguration lingered on His face, like the light on the face of Moses when he came from the mount where he had seen God?

Our Lord's manner of "looking around" so impressed St. Peter that he often speaks of it. "He looked round on the scribes with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts;" "He looked round about in the Temple." And it is only St. Peter who tells how Jesus, going to his death in Jerusalem, "*went before them in the way*." St. Matthew and St. Luke tell what Jesus said "in the way," but only St. Peter marks his manner as

he went. It was not with "bowed head," as one writer has it; it was not with the martial bearing of a general, as another writer has it; both are wrong in describing what the Evangelists would not try to describe. Something there was in the look of the Lord which mortal eyes had never seen; and as St. Peter set us thinking how Christ looked when he came down from Mount Hermon, so here he does the like by saying that as Jesus "went before them in the way, his disciples *were amazed, and as they followed him they were sore afraid.*"

My readers would do well to compare throughout the earlier with the second Gospel, and then they will feel the breadth of the difference between St. Matthew's descriptions and those of St. Peter; here a single paragraph must suffice to illustrate this. Any one would answer, and we might turn to the night when Jesus walked on the water, but that St. Peter is chary of speaking about himself;* and so

* Save when he told of his denial of his Master (Mark xiv, 66–72) and of the fearful rebuke of himself, (viii, 32, 33.) There is a touching exception to his reserve in what is found only in xvi, 7. The reticence of the second Gospel as to things pertaining to St. Peter accounts for its saying nothing of the miracle at his call, given in Luke v, 1–11. The fact of this reticence shows the Apostle's close personal relation to the second Gospel. It is readily and fully proved by comparing its record of what was said at Cæsarea Philippi with the record in the Gospel of St. Matthew: "And Peter answereth and said unto him, Thou art the Christ." Mark viii, 29. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I

let us turn to the stilling of the storm. The time of this miracle in the course of events is given in the second Gospel. In St. Matthew it comes into the two chapters following the Sermon on the Mount, which are made up of facts selected without regard to their time or place, for the purpose of portraying our Lord's general manner of life. The storm was in the night after the day of the terrible encounter with "the scribes from Jerusalem," who in Peter's house charged Jesus with casting out devils through "the Prince of the Devils." It was so busy a day that the Disciples "could not so much as eat bread." On that day Jesus began to teach the people in parables, a significant sign of the great change that had come over their hearts. At the end of that day our comparison begins.* "When Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side." St. Peter marks the very hour: "That same day when even was come, he saith, Let us pass over to the other side, and when they had sent the multitude away they took him, as he was, in the ship." *As he was* is colloquial, and points to his being tired out; it is a phrase which eye and voice interpreted, and we are to remember how real, how liv-

will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. xvi, 16–20.

* See Matt. viii, 23–27; Mark iv, 36–41; Luke viii, 22–25; also Mark iii, 22, with Matt. xii, 38; xiii, 1–3 with Mark i, 3, and note in the fourth verse the words, "And the same day when even was come."

ing to St. Mark, tone and look and gesture made all that St. Peter told.

Then comes a fisherman's touch—"there were with him other little ships." The *landsman*, taking no note of the fleet, thus goes on, "Behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with waves"—the *sailor* thus, "There arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship so that it began to fill;" the latter is the more seaman-like, but there is not much to choose. "He was asleep," says the publican; the fisherman says, "He was in the hinder part of the ship asleep on a pillow"—his head lying on the steersman's leathern-covered bench. St. Matthew says, "They awoke him, saying, Lord, save us; we perish;" the words St. Peter gives, (his own, perhaps, though more than one must have cried out,) mean that and more, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Then St. Matthew—"He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm;" St. Peter—"He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still, and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Then, verbally, they coincide; the disciples saying, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" St. Matthew brings in their words thus: "The men marveled and said"—but when St. Peter, recalling that moment, tells how "they feared greatly, and said one to another," we hear those frightened men whispering, and we see them shrinking from the Lord, while their eyes are fastened upon Him.

Yet, neither here nor anywhere in St. Mark's Gospel, is there a trace of any running counter to St. Matthew, or any wish to outvie him in description. The storm is told by St. Luke also; and a comparison of the three descriptions goes to show that, like St. Matthew, he came short of St. Peter's power of putting another in his own place.

So natural was St. Mark's impulse to write out what St. Peter had so often told, that it almost seems as if he might have done so for his own pleasure; but writing was not then the simple and easy thing it is now; and as a few Latin words indicate that he wrote in Rome, so a few words of explanation—such as, "the Jews, except they wash their hands, eat not"—show that he had others besides his own countrymen in mind.

Other motives, then, came to be associated with the originating, formative, leading motive, without which St. Mark would not have written. The order of time had been disregarded in the earlier part of St. Matthew's Gospel, and St. Mark gave the sequence of events in the life of our Lord, by placing the parts or sections of St. Peter's Gospel in their time-order.* He also recorded the few things in

* Papias says, that he was told by Presbyter John that St. Peter was wont to suit his teachings to the occasion, and did not set forth events in their order, and that St. Mark wrote them out in the same way. If ever the Presbyter did say just that, he may have thought the one fact must have been consequent upon the other; but so far as the order of events in the second Gospel is concerned, this tradition is worthless. Dr. Edward Robinson, whose sound judgment enabled him wisely to handle a learning in which no one surpassed him, prepared with his usual thoroughness and carefulness a Harmony of the Gospels, the best, perhaps, that has ever been made;

St. Peter's oral teaching that were not in the earlier Gospel—such as the exquisite parable of the secretly growing seed; the cure of a deaf and dumb man; of a blind man at Bethsaida; and he alone gives this word of the Lord, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

St. Mark opens his Evangel with a few words from Isaiah, the chief, and Malachi, the last, of the Prophets; with this he is content,* because St. Matthew had compared the life of Christ with Hebrew prophecy. His not giving the discourses of our Lord is only explicable in a similar way. This absence of prophecies from his Gospel is evidence that its construction was determined by that of the earlier Gospel, and the absence of the discourses is further evidence of this; while the absence of both more than doubles the power of this argument.

St. Mark does give the Discourse on Mount Olivet, but this is an exception to his general rule. The awe-struck Disciples, who listened with wonder to that word of prophecy, could not have seen into all its depths; for it is still giving out more and more of its meaning, and will continue to do so until all be fulfilled. St. Matthew was not one of the four who were with the Lord on Mount Olivet; he wrote down its words from the lips of St. Andrew, St. James, or St. John, as they remembered them; and St. Mark could not but think it best to give St.

he tells us that, after having fixed upon that order of events in the Gospels that seemed to him certain or most probable, he found that this was the order of St. Mark's Gospel.

* The later citation of prophecy, Mark xv, 28, found in our version, is not in the best manuscripts.

Peter's version of it, in which, towards the close, there is something of the tone and cadence of the words as they came from the lips of the Lord.

Though St. Mark's Gospel was to be read by the heathen, he says nothing of the coming of the Magi. Their witness to the Lord was of peculiar and thrilling interest to the whole Gentile world, yet, like St. Luke and St. John, he was content with what St. Matthew told. There is stronger confirmation of what has been said of the construction of St. Mark's Gospel, in its not directly revealing the Supernatural Birth of Christ—though its first line recalls this by the words, "The Son of God."* And all those who assert that St. Mark knows nothing of His supernatural origin are rebuked when, in the synagogue at Capernaum, one of the host of that Evil spirit, from whom this assertion now comes, cried out, "Jesus of Nazareth, I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God;" and again, when "in the country of the Gadarenes," a demon cried with a loud voice, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?" But in St. Mark's Gospel there is more than the witness of the lost to the nature of Christ. His own argument with the Pharisee is there: "Since David called me Lord, how am I his son?" And again: "The chief priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

* Some careless scribe left those words out of some early manuscript, but no scribe would have put them in had not St. Mark written them. Their loss would be great; but if a misjudging criticism succeeds in blotting them out of the sacred text, still they are not essential to the proof of the Incarnation from the second Gospel.

Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

Both the intelligence and the faith of the Christian congregation in giving equal honor to the second with the earlier Gospel are like that of the Apostles in their treatment of the evidence of the resurrection. Precious then as now, the mystery of the birth of the Lord; yet they fearlessly welcomed the second Gospel, though in it nothing was directly said of that great fact: and the reason why they did, is not less instructive than plain. The second, like the other Gospels, proves that Jesus was the Son of God, though its argument is simpler than that of the other Gospels. Like St. Peter himself, it is rapid and direct; and it has a peculiarly convincing power. For, like the Disciple whom Jesus loved, the disciple to whom the Father revealed the Divine nature of his Son proved the Incarnation by what he had heard and seen and known of the man Christ Jesus; that is, by what Jesus was in Himself.

Does, then, the Supernatural Birth of the Lord Jesus lose any of its evidence by the absence from the second or from the last Gospel of any direct revelation of that great fact? Not in the least; for it disparages not the revelations of it in the first and in the third Gospels to say that the evidence of the fact gains in strength when the chief Apostle and the beloved Disciple prove the divine nature of the Lord solely by what they had heard and seen of the man Christ Jesus. Their confidence in the sufficiency of that evidence breathes like confidence into

hearts willing to receive the truth; and this spirit of St. Peter in his testimony to Christ Jesus is an element of power—as is St. Matthew's, when he offers only brief evidence of the Resurrection.

St. John's argument is the same in kind with St. Peter's; but when he wrote, the revelations of the blessed Mother in the third Gospel, as well as those of the angel to St. Joseph in the earliest Gospel, were known to the Church. The straightforward boldness and originality of St. Peter's argument was in accordance with his character, and became his rank. His soul is in his Gospel, and if any one would know something of the reasons why the disciple whose steps faltered on the water, and who denied his Master, was chief of the apostles, let him read his Gospel with open heart and he may know.

Those, like silly Matthew Arnold, who talk of the revelations of the Lord's Birth in the Holy Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, as *legends*, are condemned by the course of St. Peter and St. John, when they prove from what they had known of their Master, that in him there was the Divine Nature revealed by the Angel and by the Holy Virgin. The same kind of evidence of the Great Fact is given throughout the first and third Gospels; while in the second Gospel, as in them, it is attested by the voice of God at the Baptism and at the Transfiguration; and his voice from heaven is heard for a third time in the Gospel of St. John. Each of the Gospels, then, brings direct supernatural witness to the Supernatural Fact. One reason

why the second and why the fourth Gospel did not bring in the witness of the Angel was that St. Matthew's Gospel had made it known throughout the Church; and one of the reasons why that even the beloved Disciple, of whom the Lord Jesus, when He was dying on the Cross, said to His Mother, Behold thy son, and who from that hour took Her to his own home, did not bring in Her witness was, that it had every-where been proclaimed by the Gospel of St. Luke. Thus St. Peter and St. John were free to prove the Incarnation by what they personally had known of the man Christ Jesus; and they did so prove it that to deny the Incarnation is in fact to deny all that St. Peter and St. John tell of His life; and to deny that is what those who wickedly talk of the legend of his Birth have it in their hearts to do.

In the second Gospel the Incarnation is everywhere revealed—as when the wind went down, the sea was still, and the Disciples and the seamen whispered, What manner of man is this? or when "Jesus said, Son, thy sins are forgiven thee; and there were certain of the Scribes reasoning in their hearts, Who can forgive sins but God only? and Jesus perceived in spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, and said unto them, That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power to forgive sins, (then he saith to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, and he immediately arose." To strike out the Incarnation would be to strike out the second Gospel! What then is to be said of the criticism which avers that the Incarnation is unknown to that Gospel? Yet

like unto this in folly and sin is all the adverse criticism of the Holy Gospels.*

All the Fathers who speak of the Construction of the Gospels, tell us that St. Mark wrote out St. Peter's Gospel. St. Jerome says that Paul took Titus with him as the blessed Peter did Mark, *cujus Evangelium Petro narrante et illo scribente compositum est*, whose Gospel was composed, Peter dictating and Mark writing. Even if this be taken as meaning no more than that St. Mark wrote what he heard from St. Peter, still the way of saying it shows how completely the idea that the second Gospel was St. Peter's Gospel had taken hold of St. Jerome. His opinion is of uncommon weight, for he was a translator of the Scriptures; but here his words are given as a clear and forcible utterance of the common opinion of the Fathers. At an earlier time, Irenæus says, that "Mark writing out the things that Peter said, delivered them to us;" and similar testimony from Presbyter John carries such witness back to the apostolic generation.

Alford thinks that the Fathers testify to "a private unavowed influence," of which, personally, they could have known nothing; that their witness is vague and inconsistent as to the nature and extent of that influence, and he rejects the "authorizing" of the second Gospel by St. Peter, because the fact

* As when Ewald prints St. Matthew's Gospel *in five different kinds of type to show the patchwork!* Each age looks back and sees barbarism, of which the ages before were unconscious. The ages to come will look back on this and say, Behold, the blood of the Vandals and the Goths still raging in the veins of the Ewalds and those of like propensity to destroy!

is not "apparent as it would have been had it ever existed." This painstaking scholar mistakes the nature and the value of the witness of the Fathers, as do all those who decry it as hearsay. The judgment of the Fathers as to the origin of the second Gospel was founded upon evidence that has not reached us, but which was satisfactory to them, and is to be respected as intelligent. There is nothing that contradicts their testimony, and it is upheld by all the facts in the case. That what they say is often casually said makes it none the less convincing. It is a thing, of course, that their witness should vary as to some unimportant details of time, place, and circumstance; and this is of no consequence. They leave no doubt of the great fact, that in their times the second Gospel was universally held to be, substantially, the Gospel of St. Peter. Their witness to that fact is from personal knowledge, and not from hearsay. And St. Peter's sanction of the Gospel is *sufficiently* "apparent" from that belief. Without his sanction it is hard to see how it could have been received as it was; and it is "apparent" that it never could have been so received without the sanction of some of the Apostles, so given as to lay a sure foundation for the common Christian belief in its origin and authority. In the days of the Fathers that belief found expression in all possible ways. Thus Tertullian said, that St. Mark's Gospel may be called that of St. Peter. Justin Martyr, quoting a fact found only in the second Gospel, says, This is written in the Memoirs (the Memorabilia) of St. Peter; and

in repeatedly speaking of the second Gospel as St. Peter's, I have conformed to early Christian usage.

One tradition says that St. Peter "neither encouraged nor discouraged" his enthusiastic friend; and such is the course that St. Peter would have been most likely to take at first, as he was among those who had named St. Matthew as one of the two apostolic Evangelists. St. Peter could not have wished to alter a word or line in the Gospel that St. Matthew wrote. No doubt he felt it was not in him to have done that work so well, and thankfully accepted that Gospel as the gift of God; yet he may have felt that "his son" was right in thinking that he himself could have told some things in a more lifelike way than St. Matthew had told them, *for he could.*

It is natural to think that St. Mark was not at once fully aware of how great a thing he was about to do, and that what he wished to undertake seemed too humble to be withstood by his teacher and guide. Certainly there was no thought of disparaging the excellence of the earlier apostolic Gospel, no idea that what Mark wrote would take its place, *and it never did.*

It may also be supposed that at length they were led by the Spirit of God to see how great was the thing they were doing; for in his last Epistle St. Peter said that not only while he lived would he remind the Church of the things concerning the Lord Jesus, but that he "would endeavor that it might be able after his decease to have those things in remembrance." These words may have been

meant to prepare the way for the second Gospel. His last Epistle was written not long before his death; for the Lord Jesus Christ had showed him that "he must shortly put off his tabernacle;" but there is some obscurity hanging over his martyrdom, (sure as the fact is,) and I cannot but think that for a time that Epistle was somewhat hidden in that same obscurity; and also some of the facts that concerned the second Gospel. St. Peter knew that his death was nigh, but the sudden outbreak of the persecution in which he died may have been unlooked for. In that persecution both the pupil and the Master may have died. To me the breaking off of the second Gospel so near its end seems clearly to point to the death of St. Mark; but tradition does not easily part with its heroes, and not knowing of the death of the "son" as certainly as that of his spiritual father, it wrought out for St. Mark a history in Alexandria, and at length carried his bones as triumphantly to the Cathedral of Venice, as it did those of the Magi to the Cathedral of the Rhine. But if St. Mark was suddenly martyred in the persecution when St. Peter died, we have the reason for the imperfect form of his nearly completed Gospel; and the obscurity of their fate may have also so gathered around St. Peter's last Epistle as to have been a reason why it was not at once received throughout the Christian world.

Yet on thinking over what has here been written concerning the second Gospel, my reader may say, How does this making of the second Gospel such a mere telling over again of what St. Matthew told,

consist with its having, in virtue of its own worth, an equal place in our minds and hearts with the other Gospels? The second Gospel is very much a telling over again of what is told in the first; it is also plain that St. Matthew anticipated in his Gospel some things that otherwise would have been written by the Evangelists who came after him. He joined the New Covenant so firmly to the Old Covenant that there was little need for the later Evangelists to prove the harmony of the two. Yet, that Christ Jesus was the Messiah promised and prophesied was so vital a fact, (not to the Hebrews only, but to all nations,) that St. Mark's passing it over as he did can be accounted for only on the theory that has here been set forth as to the origin and construction of his Gospel. Often and long as I have thought of this theory in the years since the idea of it first came to me, I have never had a doubt of its correctness. The theory takes note of each peculiarity and characteristic of the second Gospel, and no other that I have met with attempts to account for some of these. As said before, the second Gospel presents an image of Christ in the singleness of His majesty, as he was enshrined in the heart of the great Apostle. This Gospel comes not short of those of the other Evangelists, (if it be lawful to compare words of inspiration,) yet the earlier Gospel is the larger Gospel of the two, and St. Matthew was a greater writer than St. Peter. I disparage not the chief Apostle in saying so, for St. Peter thought so, or else he would have taken the office he helped to confer on St. Matthew. But

though St. Peter was not so great a writer he was a greater man. The greatest men are not the men who write, but the men who are written about, and to that greater class the Chief Apostle belonged.

Thus far our inquiries have gone on much as if in planning and writing their Gospels the Evangelists had been as free in thought as if they were writing essays; yet could there have been any scope for the play of their minds, since they state facts only? This should have been thought of before, and what is here said of it must be said in few words. The play of the historian's mind among his facts is one of the elements of his history. The Evangelists, more than historians, restrict themselves closely to facts; but facts are many-sided things; it takes more than one mind to see all the bearings of any given one of them, and, in the selection and recital of their facts, the play of the minds of the Evangelists comes in.

Their style varies with the character of each, yet the truth, common to them all, gives harmony to this diversity. But the harmony of the Evangelists comes not only from the common truth, but from the common inspiration of them all; and in the fore-ordering of all things, the facts that were to go into the Gospels were shaped to that end by the Divine Spirit, who wrought with the Evangelists in selecting and describing them. St. Matthew gave a world-wide breadth to the opening of his Gospel by choosing from all the facts at his command the Coming of the Magi—a wonder and sign in which

heathen were pointed and guided to the King of the Jews, by prophecy that was not Hebrew prophecy—by the Star and the miracle. Through those facts the Evangelist revealed that, in the Great Cycle of Time then closing, the mercy of God had reached all nations; through those facts he prophesied that his mercy would reach all nations in the Great Cycle of Time then beginning; and through them he revealed in the world outside of Judea a preparation for the Gospel of the Divine Redeemer, to which history was afterward to bear witness. And thus he could at once give to his Gospel, (which he had to make the most Hebraic of all the Gospels,) world-wide breadth, because the Spirit of God, as far back as the Time-Cycle when Balaam prophesied, and as far back as when the stars were set in the heavens, looked to the use of those facts by his Evangelist. Into this one element in the mystery of the Divine constructive wisdom of the Evangeliad, from generation to generation human thought will see farther and wider and deeper, but all the thought of man to the world's end will not make the whole of this knowledge its own.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE.

IN the third Gospel (now to be considered) many of the facts in the first two Gospels are repeated for the third time. Speaking in a general way, it may be said that they are the cycle of facts that belonged to the oral apostolic Gospel. One reason why the facts of the earliest Gospel re-appear in the second has been fully given; but for their third re-appearance there is a reason that reaches also to their repetition in the second Gospel. It was an axiom of Hebrew law* that it took more than one witness to prove a thing legally. By two or three witnesses facts are presented in various lights, and through a comparison of divers presentations their truth may become a matter of demonstration. This threefold repetition, then, of so much in the earlier Gospels, which is such a contrast to their chasms of silence, is to be ascribed to the Divine Spirit who watched over the forming of the Gospels; for in this way their portraiture of the life of the Son of man and Son of God has a completeness to which hu-

*The Lord names that Law. Matt. xviii, 16; John viii, 17, 18. The other Gospels note only one Demoniac at Gadara, one blind man at Jericho; St. Matthew, in each case, marks two cures, (as also in ix, 27.) He heard His Master speak of the Law; possibly had it in mind when *thrice* showing the full legal proof of His Divinity; and he alone marks the "*two* false witnesses."

man witness could have attained in no other way. And through this threefold repetition an evidence of their truth inheres in these records which is open to all—a kind of evidence that would have been entirely wanting had there been only one Evangelist, or had not the same facts been told over and over again. We should, then, put away from our minds the rationalistic notion that the Gospels are but the fruits of individual researches and inquiries, because they go over the same facts. So far from the repetition in the Gospels compelling us to believe that the Gospels belong merely to literature, it is one of the multitude of evidences of the more than human wisdom that is manifest throughout the sacred Scriptures.

Such repetition almost disappears in the last Gospel; for no evidence of the truth would avail for the salvation of those whose hearts reject the Saviour as he is revealed by the first, second, and third Evangelists. The last Gospel is for the family of the Saviour; there, with love and reverence, they know their Redeemer's voice, and, with concentrated emotion, hear his last words of peace and hope and heaven, because in the final Gospel the wisdom of the Holy Ghost changed the structure of Revelation so as to perfect their communion with their Saviour, Mediator, and Lord.

The Gospel of St. Luke is limited to the Galilean cycle of events in much the same way as the first and second Gospels; and for this limitation, reasons have been given in what was said of the construction of St. Matthew's Gospel and of that of the

Gospels generally. But the origin of the third Gospel is not as clear as that of the first Gospel; its motive is not as apparent as that of the second, and its affinities are not so close with the first. There is much in it that is not in the two earlier Gospels: the memoir of the holy Virgin, another version of the Sermon on the Mount, or of a sermon much the same but delivered at another time, a journey rich in parables and in works of mercy, (but few of which are in the earlier Gospels,) and still another version of the word on Mount Olivet. On looking into the bearing of this, I could not but suppose that the setting forth of this new material might have had much to do with the writing of this Gospel; but if that were its leading motive, and if it were of the private character that its being addressed to Theophilus might indicate, it is hard to see how it could have become of like authority with the apostolic Gospels, or with the one so closely related to St. Peter.

The honor given to Gospels of the brethren has been noted as proving that they were written in the apostolic generation, and this proof remains in full force though the Fathers tell us that Mark wrote under St. Peter's eye, and Luke under the eye of St. Paul. It is true that the Fathers have not left so general a witness to the one fact as to the other, but the tone of those who name it is that of men speaking of things known to every one—as we speak of Jefferson's having written the Declaration of Independence.

Irenæus says that "the same things that St. Paul

preached were written out by St. Luke." * The oldest catalogue of the books of the New Testament (A. D. 180) states that the third Gospel bears the name of St. Luke, but is really that of St. Paul; and this is of peculiar weight, because it embodies the judgment of one who took such an interest in the history and origin of those books as to draw up that catalogue.† As before said, some have denied the witness of the Fathers to the origin of the second and third Gospels because they could have had no personal knowledge of the facts; but, so far from this being an evidence of their sagacity, it shows how little thought they have given to the materials from which history is derived. None of the historians of Alexander the Great had any personal knowledge of him, they all lived later than his time; and the rule of those critics would unsettle ancient history and discredit most of the modern historians.

It might be divined from the second Gospel that it was in some way related to St. Peter, but it could not, in like manner, be divined that the third Gospel was related to St. Paul; and as the idea could not have come from the Gospel itself, the Fathers

* This, and similar language of other Fathers, is direct proof of much of that which has been said in this volume of the oral Gospels of the Apostles.

† Known as the Muratorian, from the name of the scholar who, near the middle of the last century, found it in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. It is reprinted in Westcott's valuable "History of the Canon." Its data is given approximately. And it should be stated that this is the case with the dates throughout this volume. They are for the convenience of the general reader, and usually point, not to the time when a person was born, but when he wrote.

must have known of the fact from historical evidence. Their testimony to the origin of the second Gospel is of great consequence; to the origin of the third it is indispensable. Without the fact which they hand down to us, we should not be able to find out how this Gospel did originate; learning from them its origin, we can find much that confirms their testimony. The torch of history in their hands so lights up its origin, that with what we know of the oral Gospel, the relations of St. Luke's Gospel to St. Paul's can be made clear.

Only a miracle could have prevented the writing out of some of the oral Gospels of the Twelve Apostles. That only two of those Gospels were written out by Apostles came from their selecting two of their number for their Evangelists. How it came to pass (humanly speaking) that St. Mark wrote out St. Peter's Gospel has been explained; and presently it will be seen that St. Luke's writing out St. Paul's Gospel came, in part, from no less natural motives than those of St. Mark.

Holding the fact that St. Luke's Gospel is in substance the Gospel of St. Paul, to be established by the witness of the Fathers, let us consider St. Luke's preface; and, as this short preface is almost enigmatical, it may be best to state the conclusions, that, in connection with other facts, I think, may be drawn from it, before trying to prove them. St. Luke says that many had taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of things believed as they were delivered by the Eye-witnesses; that is, they had undertaken to write out in their time-

order the sections of the oral Gospel of the Twelve Apostles. Paul, the thirteenth Apostle, "born out of due time," was not an eye-witness of the Word, yet he also had an oral Gospel of his own, and St. Luke wrote out the sections of that Gospel in their proper order.

St. Luke is not speaking (as commonly thought) of persons who had written a Gospel, but of those who had done a humbler work. Apparently he was not going to do over again what others had done, for if so, he would have said that he was not satisfied with their work; but he does not say this either directly or indirectly. He could not find fault with them for trying to do what they did, (on any view of his meaning,) for he was about to do much the same. St. Luke does not say expressly that his knowledge came from the Eye-witnesses; if that may be inferred, it may also be inferred that it came from some other source; and on looking into his Gospel, what he says of his perfect knowledge "of all things from the very first" naturally connects itself with the latter inference, through the revelations made by the Holy Virgin. St. Luke wrote to Theophilus, "that he might know the certainty" of what he had been taught, but what the Twelve Apostles delivered needed no confirmation; and St. Luke's reciting this in its time-order would not have given it any confirmation. There are, then, insuperable objections to the common idea that St. Luke wrote out the Gospel of the Twelve; and that idea must be given up, whether any thing better can be put in its place or not.

St. Paul's converts had learned St. Paul's oral Gospel in sections, which, unlike those of the Gospel of the Eye-witnesses, had not been set in their time-order; and, if we consider how Theophilus must have understood St. Luke's preface, its meaning becomes consistent with all the facts, and clear. St. Luke *hints* (and the word is used advisedly to express what he conveys to *us*, though his meaning was plain to Theophilus) at more than he says. He had "a full knowledge of all things"—so our version reads—but he means more than that; the word he uses means that he had diligently inquired into (followed up) all things from the very first. At the time when he wrote some knowledge of the life of the Lord could have been gained from those who had "companied with the Disciples during the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them." The earlier chapters of his Gospel did not come from the Apostles; his preface may consist with a purpose to combine what twelve Eye-witnesses had "delivered" with knowledge derived from others, or it may consist with a purpose to set forth either by itself; but Theophilus, who was familiar with all the circumstances, would have understood the allusion to the Gospel of the Twelve, and have been sure from St. Luke's having written out St. Paul's Gospel, that St. Luke meant that, in his judgment, the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles and of the Thirteenth Apostle were the same in spirit and in truth. And, further, from what we can learn or may reasonably conjecture of the history of those times, I think we shall conclude that

this was what St. Luke meant to convey, and what Theophilus gathered from his preface. And were we to accede to the notion of Ambrose and Origen that by Theophilus (a name that means lover of God) St. Luke, in a somewhat mystical oriental fashion, meant a Christian, still, the meaning of his preface would have been clear to St. Paul's converts, and through them to all the Christians at that time.

Though the Fathers held St. Luke's Gospel to be the Gospel of St. Paul, critics, orthodox, *quasi* orthodox, and infidel, have found no Pauline element in the third Gospel; but, on the other hand, a school of critics have labored to prove that Luke was the partisan of Paul, and for his sake colored facts and invented facts as deftly as a political pamphleteer. This (Tübingen) school* is evidence of its kind (and with those courteous orthodox scholars who admire its industry, commend its learning, and, may Heaven preserve their own! who praise its good intentions, it should be strong evidence) of a close relation between what Paul preached and Luke wrote.

On thinking of this question some may feel that the portrait St. Paul has unconsciously drawn of himself in his Epistles is not in harmony with the sweet and gentle spirit of St. Luke's Gospel—such should look at that portrait again. In the soul of St. Paul there was a feminine element, as there is in the souls of all heroic and noble men. He was earnest even to sternness, yet self-forgetting, and in

* So called from the University of that name.

the depths of his nature there was the tenderness of a woman.

Many, however, will deny (what thus far has been assumed, and which is essential to the proof that the third Gospel is substantially St. Paul's) that St. Paul taught a Gospel of his own. This denial was a reasonable one so long as the oral teaching of the twelve Apostles was not understood; but as each of them had an oral Gospel of his own, and as the thirteenth Apostle was "not a whit behind the other Apostles," it follows that he had his own oral Gospel. Why not? But to this question (which often may be put in lieu of a discussion) it will be answered, Because St. Paul was not one of the twelve Eye-witnesses. This fact, in part, has led to the common idea that by the term Gospel St. Paul always meant *the Truth;* but St. Paul used the word Gospel in two senses, in much the same way the word is used now. Sometimes he used it in its broad general sense; though with him and with the early Christians it never meant a system of theology, but was a name for the leading facts revealed concerning the Lord—was, in brief, Christ Jesus and him crucified; and again, by his Gospel, St. Paul meant that oral Gospel of his own, which, like the twelve Apostles, he had prepared and taught.

The Judaizing party had tampered with St. Paul's Galatian converts, and St. Paul writes to some of those converts, charging them with having "gone over" from his Gospel to "another Gospel." It is difficult now to see all the meaning of the concise

words of his heated writing, but their full meaning was felt by those to whom he wrote. Those Galatians had not apostatized, they had neither gone back to heathenism nor back to Judaism; therefore the only idea that fits well to all that St. Paul wrote to them, is, that they had put another Gospel (doubtless the written apostolic Gospel of St. Matthew) in the place of his own oral Gospel. But it is hard, with our sense of the harmony of the Gospels, to see why this should have called forth such vehement indignation; and it is hard so to transfer ourselves into that earnest and angry time as to make its war about questions, then most vital but long since dead, as real as it was. The words of St. Paul charge some of the Galatian congregation with perverting "another Gospel," which he says is "*not another*," and, from his epistle and from what is known of the great conflict among Christians at that epoch, these things are certain—They had wrested the earliest written apostolic Gospel against the cardinal truth that salvation is only through the Cross; if they had not done this doctrinally they had done it practically, and it was rightly an open and an awful sin in the eyes of Paul. They had wrested St. Matthew's written Gospel against St. Paul's oral Gospel, which was wickedly to misuse the former, for the two Gospels were truly the same in spirit and in truth; and so to abuse St. Matthew's Gospel was to bring against St. Paul the whole weight of the authority of the Apostles in Jerusalem. Having done those things, his enemies were sure to say, "Peter we know and Matthew we

know, but as for this Paul, we know not who he is," and just that they did say. They attacked his Gospel, and then attacked the Apostle himself; they first denied his teachings, and then denied his commission. These are sure inferences from what St. Paul wrote; for he gave a chapter from his own autobiography, telling that after his conversion at Damascus he conferred not with flesh and blood; went not up to Jerusalem but into Arabia; and that he received his Gospel from the Lord himself. He then tells of a journey to Jerusalem, describing it by a term not elsewhere found in the Scriptures: he went there, he says, *ἱστορῆσαι Πέτρον*; and if we may transfer his word bodily from the Greek—thus coining a term but little more strange, perchance, than St. Paul's to the Galatians, and suggesting much the same meaning that his did to them—he went there to *historize* St. Peter. The Greek term means to narrate a history or to seek material for a history, and here it points either to one or to both of these purposes. Either, then, St. Paul went up to Jerusalem to draw upon St. Peter's store of knowledge of what the Lord said and did, or else to compare his own knowledge with the recollections of St. Peter.* St. Paul closes his narrative with a solemn oath, "Now the things which I write

* Even had St. Paul merely said (as our version has it) that he went up to Jerusalem to see St. Peter, still the whole passage would have the sense that has been given to it. Its peculiar word finds the excuse for its obscurity in the plainness of the whole statement; and I have not determined the sense of the passage from the meaning of that one word, but rather the meaning of the word from that of the passage.

unto you, before God I lie not;" and, on looking at all the facts, at his reasons for bringing out the facts, and at the whole tenor of what he says, the conclusion is almost irresistible, that he had his oral Gospel chiefly in mind.

St. Paul's charge against his converts is, "You have gone over from my Gospel to another;" and it nowhere appears that he had his apostleship in mind. He may have had some thought of that, but he does not say so, directly or indirectly. His word is Gospel. "You have gone over from *my Gospel;*" and it is questionable whether he could have said "my Gospel," using the word in the broad sense of *the truth*, for in that sense the Gospel is not the Gospel of any man. The Gospel in the sense of *the truth* is known, in its fullness, only to Him who is the Truth; and a Gospel is only so much of the truth as he was pleased to make known by his servant, the Evangelist. This is marked in the title of each of the Gospels, where (the article not being found in the best manuscripts) we should read, "A Gospel according to St. Matthew," and so of the others. And when St. Paul charges his converts with having "gone over to another Gospel," he says in the same breath it is not "another"—words intelligible enough if the view that has been taken of their meaning be correct, while it is difficult to give them any other sense that accords with the fact that the Galatians had not apostatized.

St. Paul's conflict with the Judaizing party (marks of which are deeply graven in the sacred records)

was a life and death struggle for the Cross; for they held that if a man were not circumcised he could not be saved. For and against this dogma, which now seems so foolish, ridiculous, and unchristian, the war raged with fierceness and bitterness; but the party of the faith so thoroughly triumphed that the struggle was almost forgotten until interest in it was awakened by that spirit of inquiry into the past which is characteristic of our times. In the long-forgotten struggle in the earliest Christian generation not only was truth more dear to St. Paul than his own life, in peril, but he himself had every thing at stake; for the ritualists denied his apostleship, and they overthrew the faith of many not only in his teaching but in his commission. In the midst of the continuing and universal battle, which raged not only among the volatile Frenchmen of Galatia but every-where, St. Luke put forth the Gospel of the decried and defamed Apostle; (not, indeed, without higher motives,) yet for the Apostle's vindication. *Seeing this*—St. Luke's addressing his Gospel to Theophilus, (a man of good repute, no doubt, yet of so little mark that but for St. Luke his name would have perished,) which ever before had seemed very strange to me, *became clear*. For had St. Luke declared that he was instructed and commissioned by the hated Apostle to do what he did, it would have gone far to defeat his purpose. Addressed to Theophilus, his Gospel was for the converts of St. Paul and for the whole congregation. Its brief preface simply indicated what St. Luke had too much tact to make offensively plain, that

St. Luke had diligently inquired into whatever had been delivered by the Twelve Apostles, that he had searched into all things from the first, and, therefore, all might be certain of the truth of what the Apostle to the Gentiles taught; and this preface was followed by what was at once recognized (for the most part at least) as the oral teaching of the calumniated Apostle.

The calling forth of the natural powers of the holy Evangelists for purposes and through motives in part resembling those of other men, has, in these times, been more thought of than ever before; and the inquiries made concerning this have, thus far, been more or less of a hinderance to faith in the holy Scriptures; but, in the end, larger knowledge of the natural in the Scriptures will confirm their inspiration. The more clearly natural purposes, motives, and powers are seen working to produce the Gospels, the more clearly is seen in them a Supernatural purpose and power; and thus it will, at last, be more manifest than ever that each of the Gospels is an achievement high above all human effort. Let us, then, hopefully pursue our fearless inquiries, for it is true alike of the Written and of the Living Word, that to know the human in either is to be certain that there is in each the indwelling of the Divine.

In consequence of the malice of the enemies of St. Paul in Jerusalem, he was constrained from openly doing his work. His two years of duress at Cæsarea by the Sea were years of seeming inaction—but is it possible that St. Paul was ever inactive? During those two years St. Luke was

his companion; and the place, (within the bounds of the Holy Land,) the freedom of St. Paul from any close restraint, the length of the time, and all the circumstances, accord with the supposition that in the imprisoning of Paul at Cæsarea, "the wrath of man" was so overruled to the praise of God, that it led to the writing out of the Gospel of Paul by the hand of Luke.

St. Paul had that executive capacity and good fellowship which promptly calls in the help of others; and in the writing out of his Epistles he at times did this. St. Paul was too great a man to envy the gifts of other men; and he could not but have known that the genius and culture of his friend and companion, St. Luke, were better fitted than his own for some kinds of writing. For an orderly arrangement of ideas St. Paul was not remarkable, and the calm flow of narrative was not suited to his rapid mind. The torrent rush of his thoughts brooked not the restraints that would have been a help to their utterance. He is often plain, he is always powerful, yet sometimes his sentences are twisted into almost inextricable convolutions; and the contrast between his rugged, broken, impassioned, vital eloquence, and the facile and well-turned periods of his companion, has been one of the strongest reasons why literary critics have doubted the Pauline element of the third Gospel. It is, however, more reasonable to suppose that St. Luke's writing out of the Gospel of Paul grew, in part, out of this difference in their style and manner of writing, and that, on perceiving St. Luke's superior

historic gifts, St. Paul willingly and gladly permitted a larger liberty in composing and writing than he would have given to another.

At this point, let us glance at an Epistle whose history may here have some light thrown upon it, and in its turn may throw some light upon that of the third Gospel. The Fathers say, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was St. Paul's; and in proof of this, it is here sufficient to say, that it was pronounced to be such by the Council of Laodicea, (A. D. 363.) But though (as with the Second Epistle of St. Peter) its origin was known to some of the Churches, and to so many more than at once received St. Peter's Second Epistle, that it was widely accredited from the beginning, yet it was not for a time universally acknowledged; and for this some of the reasons are evident. The Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed only to a part of the Church, and therefore it was not likely to find its way to the whole Church as quickly as the other Epistles. It did not bear the superscription of St. Paul; and its style was so unlike that of any of the Epistles known to be his, as to raise a doubt as to its Pauline authorship. The evidence, then, (as in the somewhat similar case of the third Gospel,) which, in some way, connected St. Paul with the Epistle to the Hebrews, must have been strong; and what we have seen of the state of things at the time agrees with the idea that there was such a connection. In the great conflict in which the honor of Christ, the purity of the faith, and Paul's own standing among his brethren, were in peril, there was urgent need

of an appeal to the Hebrew Christians, that should meet, on Hebraic ground, those who were swerving from the faith; and there was urgent need of an argument from the Old Covenant that should win the victory for the New Covenant. If it were to accomplish its immediate purpose such an argument could not go forth in the name of St. Paul. The style of Apollos may have been better suited to such an argument; and that he was in heart and soul in unison with the Apostle is a sure inference from St. Luke's commendation of Apollos, as "an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures." Those words exactly describe the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews; but whether Apollos wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, or some one else, the fact that the early Christians held it to be one of St. Paul's Epistles at least proves that it was written under the Apostle's eye.

Nearly all that was sent forth by the other side in that great struggle has utterly perished, with the curious and almost worthless exception of the Clementine Homilies, a sort of religious romance, in which, though written after Paul's lifetime, there is an echo of the unscrupulous and bitter hate of the Judaizing party toward the Apostle. But the documents that were written by St. Paul, and those that were written by men acting in concert with him, are a complete justification of my denial of the assertion, that there was no literary instinct at work among the Christians in the apostolic generation. In a purely literary point of view, nothing was ever better concerted, nothing was ever better timed,

nothing more exactly fitted to its end, and nothing more successful in accomplishing its end, than the sending forth of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Gospel of St. Luke, and "his treatise," known as the Acts of the Apostles. Christian antiquity ascribed the Epistle and the Gospel to Paul, because they came from the camp of the great Apostle; and St. Paul's prisons were camps from which his orderlies went forth, and the war was carried on. Both of the contending parties knew that the mind, the will, and the teaching of the great Champion were in the Epistle and in the Gospel; and, paying more heed to facts than to forms, they said they were St. Paul's; and they were —for the orders given by a General on a battle-field are his orders, though written out by subalterns.

The spirit of St. Luke was pacific and conciliatory. He was unwilling to say any thing that would inflame the quarrel, that had arisen to such an alarming height, that at Antioch St. Paul "withstood St. Peter to his face"* because, as he boldly told the Galatians, "he was to be blamed." When St. Luke struck into this great and universal con-

* See Gal. ii, 11–16. This afterward gave to St. Peter an occasion to show how grandly he could forget his anger, when just before his own decease, in his last Epistle, (as was most needful,) he gave his powerful support to St. Paul, by assigning to his Epistles a place of equal honor with the writings of the holy Prophets. 2 Pet. iii, 15, 16. And (though with this there blends language that almost seems to detract from it) yet may it not have been, that in ways hard to prove yet easy to conjecture, the still powerful Judaizing faction may have partially succeeded for a time in depriving St. Peter's Epistle of some of the honor that was its due, because of the honor it gave to the Apostle to the Gentiles?

flict he trod boldly on dangerous ground. His admirable spirit was that of a man strong and wise as well as good; and I think that his Gospel, (together with the Epistle to the Hebrews,) may have done hardly less than the Epistles and the labors of St. Paul himself, to bring about harmony in the Church. St. Luke set the oral teaching of the calumniated Apostle in order, so that it might conveniently be compared with that of St. Matthew. By transcribing the memoir of the holy Virgin he brought her fame to the vindication of the Apostle. His earlier chapters were felicitously adapted to conciliate the Jewish party, for they revealed the fulfillment of the ancient promises to Israel, and they clothed the religion of the holy Temple with a sacred beauty that, losing nothing of its charm, is felt by all who read those chapters now. Thus, his Gospel, like the preaching of St. Paul, was addressed, "first to the Jew and then to the Gentile." Not until he had given to his earlier pages this warm and rich Jewish coloring did he bring in the Genealogy of Jesus, which seems out of place until his reason for placing it where he does appears. This genealogy he carries back not only to Abraham, the father of the Jews, but to Adam, the common father of the human race, thus opening the full breadth of the mission of Christ; and to do this more convincingly he does not bring in this genealogy until after the signs at the Baptism. And here, in this Gospel, is laid a basis for St. Paul's teaching to the Corinthians—"The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a

quickening spirit; the first man is of the earth earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven;" —and something of the contrast there drawn out seems here to be indicated, when it is said of Jesus, "who was the son of Adam," and also said, "who was the Son of God."

My readers can further pursue this line of thought for themselves, yet one correction of our version may make St. Luke's carrying out of his *immediate purpose* more clear. The angel did not say to the shepherds, "I bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people," but to *the people*, that is, to the children of Israel; yet it consists with the breadth that he meant to give to his Gospel when of those good tidings the anthem of heaven instantly opens the world-wide promise. And there is a like utterance of both ideas when good old Simeon is moved by the Holy Ghost to say, "Thy salvation thou hast prepared *before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles*, and the glory of thy people Israel."

St. Luke followed his Gospel with the Acts of the Apostles; and here, again, his earlier chapters are felicitously adapted to his immediate purpose. There is no shaping or coloring of the facts; his narrative of the Pentecost has the completeness and simplicity of truth; nothing can be more natural than the conduct of the witnesses of those supernatural events; and yet if the supernatural had there been foreordained solely for that very end it could not have accorded better with St. Luke's purpose to vindicate the course of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

The Spirit of God there foreshadowed that evangelizing of all nations which was the work which the Lord Jesus intrusted especially to Paul. And when the disciples begin to speak in the tongues of the nations as the Spirit gave them utterance, it is the chief Apostle, it is St. Peter himself, who interprets to the multitude the wonder and sign by the words of the prophet, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out my Spirit *upon all flesh*." After the miracle at the gate called Beautiful, St. Peter reminds the people of the divine covenant with Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." In alien Samaria Philip preaches the things concerning the kingdom, and then St. Peter, "sent" by the Apostles, preaches "in many villages of the Samaritans." To St. Peter comes a vision so enlarging his ideas of Christ's kingdom, that at Cæsarea by the Sea, he opens the way in which the Apostle to the Gentiles was to walk, by the baptism of the Roman, Cornelius. And while these great and significant events are going on in the glorious company of the Apostles, Saul is in the company of those Jews who plan the trial and the death of St. Stephen; and the martyr's defense of himself before "the council" is a defense of the course of St. Paul, who, in the end, takes up the work of St. Stephen just where he left it when Saul was consenting to his death.

The contrast, then, of the spirit and course of Saul with that of St. Peter makes the course of Paul more striking and glorious when, called to this work by the Lord in person at Damascus, and car-

rying out what St. Peter began, he goes forth to evangelize the nations. St. Luke, then, records such labors, triumphs, and sufferings of the Apostle that the Apostle's death is not needed for his vindication. St. Luke could not record *that*, for he did not wait until his friend was dead to fight his battle; he came to his friend's help while he lived, and what he told of him was so much to St. Paul's honor that could he have placed the crown of martyrdom on the brow of the dead Apostle it would have added nothing.

When thinking of the greatness of St. Luke as the earliest historian of the Church, I cease to wonder that generations passed before any mortal dared to follow in his footsteps! But if we rest even for an instant in the idea that St. Luke wrote only as the champion of a man, though that man were St. Paul, or if we rest even for an instant in the idea that he was merely the historian of the Church, we undervalue the gift of God in what he wrote. We have traced his lower purpose to mediate between the hostile parties in the Congregation, that we might gain that better understanding of the origin and construction of his writings which is needful in the doubts and controversies of these times; but the greater is sacrificed to the less if we do not ever remember that in what St. Luke wrote concerning what was done after the Resurrection as well as before, he was the Evangelist of the Lord Jesus. His soul was ever bent to tell what the Lord Jesus "*began* both to do and to teach;" and what an idea that word gives of St. Luke's intelligence of the far-

reaching purposes of the Lord, for never did sublimer truth visit the soul than that which is uttered in that word *began!* The full sense of St. Luke's glory as Christ's Evangelist has rightly veiled his lower and more human purposes—as the sunlight veils the stars—for, through the help of God's grace, all that was merely human in his motive and purpose was made so entirely subordinate to his manifestation of the Lord, whether in his life on earth or as he rules at God's right hand, that St. Luke's Scriptures are an everlasting blessing, while all that was temporary in the ends they once served is well-nigh forgotten.

St. Paul said he had "neither received his Gospel of man nor was taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ." We have seen reason to think that he was then speaking of his oral Gospel, and there are some other reasons that may go to uphold this conclusion. The Judaizing party wrested St. Matthew's Gospel against the truth in its integrity, and this, with the fact that the chief Apostle found it so difficult to hold on to the true idea of the large freeness of the New Dispensation, though revealed to him in vision, make it quite certain that such a Gospel as that of St. Luke could not have been written by any one of the Twelve Apostles. And in such a state of feeling as then existed among those Apostles, may there not have been, in the case of the third Gospel, the *nodus dignus vindice*, the occasion calling for an intervention of the Lord Jesus, that would correspond to the meaning that has been given to St. Paul's words?

In St. Paul's fulfilling the work it was given him to do his great instrument of power was his oral Gospel; his preaching, like that of the Twelve Witnesses, was the telling of what the Lord Jesus said and did; and as St. Paul had not been an eye-witness of the Lord, as he was to stand so much alone in his work and to be hated by many in the Church for what he did, may there not have been sufficient reason why, in framing his oral Gospel, he should have had help from the Lord in person? May it not have been that nothing else would have met the case? And what is the meaning that should be given to these words of our Lord to Paul at Damascus: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness of these things which thou hast seen, *and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee?*"

Whether St. Paul means that he had communications from the Lord that put him in as good condition as the other Apostles to frame his oral Gospel; or whether, in learning of the life of his Lord, he availed himself of means open to all, interrogating disciples more favored than himself, comparing and weighing their words, supplying from the memory of one what was lacking in another, and that his oral Gospel thus framed was sanctioned by the Lord in person—these are open questions; but while the latter idea may answer to his words, and seems to be required by some of the facts in the case, nothing less than this can answer to his words.

While thinking of these questions I looked to see whether any thing could be found in the third Gos-

pel to confirm the meaning that has here been given to St. Paul's words. The prayer of the thief whispered from dying lips and the Saviour's low response may have been inaudible to others; though the loud reviling of the impenitent felon when nailed to the cross may have been heard, and so have come to St. Matthew's knowledge. The other Evangelists seem not to know that on the Mount, Moses and Elias talked with Jesus *of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem;* Peter and they that were with him seem then (Luke ix, 31–33) to have been "heavy with sleep." I thought also of the change in the order of the Temptations in the wilderness. But though in these things there may possibly be the evidence I was seeking, this is far from certain. The lack of such evidence may be in part the reason why St. Paul's words are so generally held to refer to the Gospel in its broad sense. But natural as may be the impulse to see if in that way the origin of the Gospel can be determined, it is a mistaken one; for as the Gospels are all inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, it would probably be utterly in vain to seek in the third Gospel for any distinguishing signs of his special intervention. And it should be remembered by those believers who incline rather to lessen than to heighten the miraculous in the Gospels, that the miraculous is not a thing of degrees. *The intervention of the Lord Jesus in the framing the third Gospel would have been no more miraculous than his recalling by his Spirit his Sermon on the Mount to St. Matthew, or his last discourses to St. John.*

CHAPTER VII.

ST. JOHN AND THE OTHER EVANGELISTS.

IN the presence of nature artists feel that they cannot picture its full glory; that they can only *suggest* the might of the ocean, the grandeur of the mountains, the mystery of the skies. Like this feeling of artists in the presence of nature was the feeling of the Evangelists in the presence of the Lord. Had they tried to do what unbelief blames them for not doing, they could not have been the holy Evangelists, nor could Jesus have been the Son of God!

The first Evangelist opens the way for the second, the two for the third, and the three, hand joined in hand, make ready for the last Gospel. Here the plow might be driven in deep, abundant harvests gathered. "The world could not contain the books that might be written" concerning the harmonies through which the four Gospels become the one Gospel. Those harmonies disclose themselves to every deeper look, but all that can here be done is barely to indicate lines of thought that run to every chapter, paragraph, and verse.

Each Evangelist wrought according to the laws of his own nature while portraying so much of the glory of Jesus as the Spirit revealed; yet each one

of them brings out something that might rather be looked for in the Gospel of some one of the others. In St. Matthew's, Jesus is *Christ rejected;* yet he is *Rex tremendæ majestatis*, the King terrible in majesty, who sends "not peace on earth, but a sword." There he is the "smitten and afflicted" One whom the prophets foreknew; *there it is written*, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head;" and *there it is also written*, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations."

Recalling the difficulty of even St. Peter's having written such a Gospel as St. Luke's, let us give a parting glance at the motives through which the Divine Wisdom ordained that a Gospel such as that of St. Mark should emanate from one of the Twelve, when as yet their souls were not wholly freed from the trammels of Judaism. The second Gospel sets forth the authority of Jesus in teaching, his power in action; it reproduces the impression which the Lord's Divinity made on St. Peter's own soul and on the souls of others; it tells not of the quaking earth, the rending graves, but of how the Roman, whose soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross, cried out when Jesus died, "Truly this man was the Son of God." Through its affinity with the first Gospel, and through its originating motive, humble and human as it was, it becomes a presentment of Christ as prefigured in Melchizedek,

who "was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God." * Thus this Gospel prolongs, and, if it were possible, makes the majesty of the Saviour more sublime; and yet in this Gospel alone is it said that the kindred of Jesus thought "he was beside himself."

We should further mark how the truth unfolds in the Gospels in that order in which they are to stand forever. At their beginning, through the title Emmanuel, St. Matthew reveals who Jesus was, which is the more significant, since nowhere else in the New Testament is that title given to the Saviour. To prove that there was in Jesus the nature thus revealed St. Matthew bends all the might of his mind, and then St. Peter is sent to his aid. All the Gospels reveal the Son of God; but after those of St. Matthew and St. Peter comes that of St. Paul, which, still opening His glory and His grace, is more fully the Gospel of the man Christ Jesus. In the first Gospel nothing is told of the human circumstances of the Birth of Jesus; in the second nothing is said of his birth at all, it begins with Christ Jesus, the Son of God. Then, the course of the revelation would be instructive to those who would fain believe there is a legendary element in the Gospels, were their hearts open to reason; for though the third Gospel confirms those before it as to the nature of Jesus, it goes on to tell of the new-born Babe tended by his mother in the manger of an inn. The Babe carried to the Sanc-

* See Gen. xiv, 18, 19, 20; Heb. vii, 1–3.

tuary is redeemed like other babes; his Mother is purified like other women; the Child grows in wisdom and stature; at twelve years of age the Boy comes, as other boys do, to the Temple with his father and mother; and the Man preaches his first sermon in Nazareth, "where he had been brought up."

Thus the unfolding of the Gospel conforms to the fact, which is not that Jesus was a man raised to the skies, but that he came down from heaven.* After revealing the Son of God it gives to his birth all its human environments, even to the placing of the crib of the new-born Babe among the cribs of the patient cattle, "who wait for the manifestation of the sons of God." It descends into all the humiliation of the helplessness of infancy without the least jarring upon our intellectual, moral, or æsthetic sense—a literary miracle that should convince men of letters of the truth of what is so divinely told. Yet literary genius, shrinking from the consequences of owning Jesus who convicts of sin and condemns sin, has too often withheld its witness to this miracle wrought within its own sphere; yet what the wise would hide from their hearts is the silent thought, not the less real, though voiceless, of the most unlettered Christian that ever heard the Gospel of St. Luke.

The Divine majesty of Jesus is every-where in the third Gospel; yet, in comparison with the first and second Gospels, and in one view of it, (not exclusive or exhaustive, yet a true one,) St. Luke's is

* Here see his own words to the ruler of the Jews. John iii, 13.

the Gospel of the Son of man. As such it harmonizes the earlier Gospels with the last, leading on to the Gospel of St. John, in which the glory of the Son of God shines through the glory of the Son of man.

Knowing that he would "tarry" long, St. John gave to his share of the work that was assigned by the Apostles to St. Matthew and himself * the patient thought of a long life-time. Meanwhile, St. Matthew had finished his share of the work as early as the seventh year after the crucifixion, and his Gospel, with those of St. Mark and St. Luke, had become known to the whole congregation. In the changes of those years the strange speculations of the Gnostics so began to appear, that the prelude to St. John's Gospel may, in part, have been meant to guard against errors that were more fully to be developed; and some have thought that St. John kept those errors in mind throughout his Gospel. But, on considering the earlier Gospels, the method of St. John, and that his was the final Gospel, it would seem that had there been no such theosophic, Oriental heresies, its first fourteen verses might have been as they are.

* On page 114 a tradition given by Eusebius was reconciled with what had been said of the origin of St. John's Gospel. The Muratorian tradition is that in a vision it was revealed to Andrew, the Apostle, that John was to write a Gospel. This might confirm what had been said of the apostolic selection of John as an Evangelist, but I thought it best to ground that fact solely on the reasons given, and refer to the tradition solely for the sake of completeness. Yet, with some other facts, it makes it probable that when St. John wrote he had not outlived all his brethren, which, inadvertently, is almost implied in the words supposed, on page 112, to have been uttered by the last of the Apostles save St. John.

The error that the tone of the last Gospel, as to the glory of Christ, is at variance with that of the others, finds its evidence, if any where, in those fourteen verses, and it is disproved by one of the purposes for which they were written. For through those verses St. John brought his Gospel into harmony with what St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke had before made known of the glory of Jesus at his birth, at his baptism, and on the three mountains. Of all men St. John was the one best fitted to clothe in words the truth contained in those fourteen verses; but, evidently, it is truth that is confirmed as well as affirmed—it is truth which was familiar to all Christians.* And that it was thus familiar would be seen by all (save those who mistake or willfully disparage the intelligence of the early Christian congregations) had the books of the New Testament been placed in their time-order; for then St. Paul's Epistles to the Philippians and Ephesians, with the Epistle to the Hebrews, would have come in before the last Gospel.

No general statement can sum up the work of the aged apostle, no one formula can express all he had

* The statement of Eusebius, that when St. John wrote, the other Gospels were every-where known, is discredited in recent comments, because it is imagined that St. John could not have known of the other written Gospels. Yet, on looking at the dates given in those orthodox volumes to the four Gospels, and on reflecting upon the civilization of the Roman world in St. John's time, one cannot but think that if St. John, with his commanding position and intellect, had not heard of and read the other Gospels, the great Apostle, while not a very old man, must have become stone-deaf and stone-blind. Truly the Christian religion is divine; it triumphs over the assaults of enemies, and it outlives the folly of its friends!

in his mind and heart to do; yet his thesis, with as much completeness and precision as it well can be set forth in a single line, is this: *The Eternal Word manifest in the flesh.* But it should be further said that, by his first fourteen verses, St. John was made free to lay more stress than he otherwise might have done on that part of his thesis indicated by the words *manifest in the flesh;* also, that he does not try to heighten the idea of the divine nature of Jesus through higher revelations than those in the earlier Gospels, (which it was not possible to do,) and that his method of disclosing the divine nature of Jesus is rather by broadening and heightening the impression made by his human nature. Thus the course of the Gospels is that of the natural development of faith in Jesus; for first the soul is struck with the miracle of his divinity, and then with the miracle of his humanity, and at last it finds in the latter an ever-increasing evidence of the former.

The courage of the earlier Evangelists, when they have no fear that the cruel mockings and scourgings of Jesus will take away from the sense of his Divinity, is morally sublime. St. John shares in that feeling, and in him it passes into an ever-present conviction that to know the Son of man is to believe in the Son of God. In a way almost his own —though there are instances of it in the other Gospels—St. John brings out the Saviour's divinity through sudden and vivid contrastings of his divine and his human nature. "When Jesus saw Mary weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in spirit and was troubled.

Jesus wept; and again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave." Out of his own heart St. John writes; like St. Matthew, he tells of what he feels. Writing such as theirs comes in no other way. St. John knows that souls open to the truth will feel as he feels; and though the mystery of the humanity of Jesus when he weeps and groans at the grave of Lazarus becomes almost oppressive, yet even then (though we hardly know why) we as truly feel his divinity as when, almost in the same breath, "He cries with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth."

Knowing the difference between his method and that of the other Evangelists, in his First Epistle St. John marks, by his use of the plural, that his witness to the Lord is that of all the Apostles; and there he thus states the purpose and method of his Gospel: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, (for the life was manifest, and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father and was manifest unto us,) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us."

In Jerusalem, almost from the very first, Jesus was *on his trial and was condemned by the Jews.* On the first coming of the Saviour to the city (John ii, 24) he would not commit himself to the Jews because he knew them. Chapter vii, 1, gives as the reason why he "would not walk in Jewry," that the Jews "sought to kill him." Before that (v, 16, 18)

it is said, the Jews sought to slay him;* and the end, which came at last, was put off only by his prudence and the intervention of God. As a consequence of this state of things, what he said in Jerusalem was of a more personal character than the comparatively impersonal Sermon on the Mount. In Jerusalem, in his last hours with his disciples, his words have the openness of heart of the words of one who knows that he is about to die. Some of those words are as clear revelations of his divinity as any he ever made—"Hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" yet some of them most strikingly prove him truly man, as when he said, "I have kept my Father's commandments." And his Church has ever felt that Christ is never more visibly divine, and never more human, than in his last hours with his family. Much, then, of all that was given to St. John was especially suited to his method. But, in meditating upon his Gospel, and also upon the others, it is to be remembered that each Evangelist was guided and watched over by the Divine Spirit, who inspired his purpose and wrought toward his Gospel, even to the fitting beforehand of events and words to that end.†

* See also John viii, 1, 37, 40; x, 31; xi, 8, 16. Chap. viii says, "They took up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by." The Greek word rendered "hid himself" means "was hidden;" it points to a miraculous shielding of Jesus. The greater number of manuscripts omit the last clause of the verse.

† Of this truth I have before spoken, and would offer these two scriptures as indirect yet pertinent evidence of it: John ix, 2, 3, "His disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his par-

To St. John it was given to complete the Gospel; and therefore his presentment of the Lord must needs be in many ways, a broadening and heightening of what was before made known of Him. The earliest Gospel recalls what Isaiah foreknew of the kindling of the Great Light; and in the third Gospel there is Simeon's prophecy that the holy Child would be a light unto the nations; but St. John, long meditating upon the whole of ancient Scripture, even from the day when in the natural world the *element* Light prefigured Christ in the spiritual world, concentrates into a focus all its rays, and declares Jesus to be the true Light, who enlighteneth every man. He never loses sight of this, and he proves it by the Scriptures* and by the miracles and by the words of Jesus, with a fullness and power that becomes the final Gospel. In like manner St. John sets forth the truth that Jesus is the Life of the soul. Thus, also, in his Gospel and in his Epistles, he reveals that in Jesus the love of God is offered unto us. And in meditating upon these things, we

ents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be manifest in him." John xi, 4, "When Jesus heard that [Lazarus was sick,] he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." There is more direct evidence of it in the many verses where certain things are said to have been done "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled."

* There are more direct references to the Hebrew Scriptures in St. Matthew's Gospel than in all the others put together; yet the judicious Archbishop Trench says of St. John, "His Gospel, apparently less, is indeed far more thoroughly steeped in the Old Testament, connected with it by finer and subtler links, than any of the other three."

should remember that this is the Gospel of the Disciple who was nearer than any of his brethren to the blessed Mother, as well as to her crucified Son. Thus, in every way, the last of the Holy Evangelists was fitted so to present Jesus in his human nature, as through his human nature to bring the children of men into communion with him as the divine Redeemer, the only begotten Son of God.

St. John tells us that his Gospel was written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that believing we might have life through his name. In the earlier part of this volume, the fact that all the Gospels are arguments to prove this, was dwelt upon; for without its light, their structure is dark; and when the Gospels are mistaken for biographies or histories there are seeming faults in their construction which can readily be perverted into evidence of a fragmentary and legendary origin. But though the fact that the Gospels are such arguments be indispensable to the clearing up of their structure, yet devout souls, instinct with a wisdom of the heart better than that of the intellect, may feel that with the enlightenment it brings there comes a sense of pain and loss; and the effect of that truth is a questionable one unless we discern by whom the argument is really made. The argument in the Gospels is not made by the Evangelists, but by the Lord himself. There Jesus proves himself the Son of God, the Saviour from sin and every human ill, even from death and the grave. Between this idea of the Gospels and every other the difference is immense. Every other

idea of his Gospels is meaningless and worthless in comparison. From its root it is unlike all partial and human ideas of the Gospels. It reaches to their source and discloses the true power of those wonders of the Eternal Spirit with which time has nothing to do. For Christ Jesus comes to us all in his Gospels as truly as he came to those Jews who received or rejected him. His Gospels bring us all into the presence of our Judge. They compel us to look on the face of the Saviour, whom if we do not accept, we deny. They make to us as real and personal an appeal as that which Pilate made to the Jews, when he said, *Ecce Homo*, Behold the man! And with this coming unto us of Jesus in his Gospels, his rejection by the Jews is so inwrought for our warning, that the same wickedness there was in them we see in ourselves, if we, through our unbelief, crucify the Son of God afresh.

Such in St. Matthew's Gospel is the rejection of the Saviour by the Jews, that while it is a pervading element in the second and third Gospels—the contrast with that darkness making the light more vivid—it is less marked in them, because they were never to be separate from St. Matthew's. In St. Mark's Gospel the Saviour comes to all as the man Christ Jesus, by word and deed revealing himself the Son of God. In St. Luke's Gospel he comes as the universal Friend and Lord, the King of the promised age of peace and good-will to man. In St. John's Gospel, as said before, he comes to Christians; and I would now complete this truth by saying, that in the last Gospel He comes to all with a

directness of appeal that puts the spirit that is within us to the most severe of all tests. There He who is the Light of the world shines most searchingly into the darkness of our hearts; there his witness to himself is the most open and full; there the purpose of the Jews to slay him is instant, repeated, relentless; and great as was their sin, so great is the sin of all those who reject the Lord Jesus when he pleads with them in the last Gospel. And trusting to my readers to give all needed qualification to general words, it may, further, be said, that those who reject Jesus as he comes to them in the earlier Gospels, reject the Son of God; and those who reject him as he comes to them in the Gospel of St. John, reject the Son of man.

St. John completes the Evangeliad; and then, as we contemplate its structure, we see in it the hand of Him who planned the worlds in time, for in it the course of the Spirit of God is seen to be the same with his course in history. He first established the truth of the Divinity of Jesus so that it can never more be questioned in his Church, and he then began the full revealing of his Humanity. The Church is now divinely moved as never before to contemplate the relations of the Humanity of her Lord with all that is below the sun; and those are yet to be disclosed with a fullness beyond all imagining. Their sources are in his Divine Nature, for Jesus can be in sympathy with all that rightly springs out of the Human Nature, whether in the family, the nation, or the race; he can be in full sympathy with every rightful human hope and calling and art, redeem-

ing, informing, purifying and glorifying all, because he is the Eternal Word, who is the Life in nature, the Light in the soul.

There has ever been some perception of the affinity of the Divine with the Human Nature. In the heathen mythologies gods come down to the earth in the likeness of men, and mortals are raised to the skies as gods. Such facts go to prove that the Incarnation of the Eternal Word is a truth which the soul is not unfitted to receive, while at the same time they prove that the idea of a perfect union of the two natures in one Being is not one the human mind, unaided, can seize hold upon. Apart from the man Christ Jesus—Son of God and Son of man, the fullness of the Divinity given in the one term being equal to the fullness of the Humanity given in the other—the idea of such a Being was not a possible one. It was not possible for man to have conceived of the union of the Two Natures in Christ, and it was equally impossible for the Apostles to have conceived of a Life answering to such a conception, had not the Eternal Life who is with the Father been manifest in the flesh. They had seen him and known him, and *herein is the sufficient answer* to all doubt and unbelief concerning the Holy Gospels—by the grace of God they so bear witness to Christ Jesus that the Written Word is the brightness of the glory of the Living Word and the express image of his person.

CHAPTER VIII.

UNITY OF THE EVANGELIAD.

IN the course of these inquiries nothing has been said of St. Matthew's bold departure from the order of time. This could only be explained in a volume given to that Gospel. With that exception, the question, How St. Matthew's Gospel came to be in manner and form as it is? has been answered in what has been said of the purpose of a Gospel and of its consequent limitations; of the relations of his Gospel to the oral Gospel; of the concert of action between St. Matthew and St. John; and in the chapters that give the reasons for his silence or reserve as to some facts of great moment, and that also fixed the time when St. Matthew wrote. Some things that were said of the construction of the earliest Gospel bore upon that of the other Gospels, and the simpler motive and less complicate structure of the second Gospel permitted a somewhat complete answer to be given to the question, How did that Gospel come to be in manner and form as it is? We have also inquired into the origin of the third Gospel, and into the relations of the final Gospel with St. Matthew's and with those of the other two Evangelists.

The relations traced out have, in the main, been those of a general kind; but besides these, there

are special affinities and correspondencies between the Gospels, and between parts of the same Gospel, whose thorough searching out gives a sense of *the oneness of the Evangeliad* that can be given in no other way. Thus St. John gives no description of the Ascension, (twice described by St. Luke,) yet in his Gospel (vii, 63) it is foretold by the Lord himself; and again, (xx, 17,) in what He said to Mary Magdalene. The Eucharist is not described by St. John, yet the truths that were uttered when it was instituted were revealed before in the Discourse in the Synagogue at Capernaum, (vi, 32–58,) given only by St. John. As casual illustrations of such harmonies compare what St. Matthew says of the Baptist's reception of the Pharisees with our Lord's words in the third Gospel, (vii, 29, 30; xi, 44.) Also compare Acts iv, 13 with John vii, 15; also John vii, 53 and viii, 1 with Matt. viii, 20 and Luke xxi, 37; also John vii, 47 with Matt. xxvii, 63; also Mark viii, 12 with John xi, 33, 38. An exhaustive study of such harmonies of Scripture seems to be impossible. To trace them with the help of a reference Bible and Concordance (and especially the prophetic intimations of the New in the Old Dispensation) is a constant pleasure and surprise. Every one may find new ones, for these cross lights are as numberless as those of the stars, and the marvel of these lights in the firmament of Scripture is as great as the marvel of the lights in the firmament of heaven—and the heavens will pass away, (2 Pet. iii, 11,) but the truths which the Lord reveals in his holy Scriptures abide forever!

It has been our intent to give only a general view of the unity of the Evangeliad, and we conclude with a word more concerning the most remarkable of the differences between the three earlier Evangelists and St. John, who completed the writing out of the Gospel. Much thought has been given to minor differences, and comparatively little to the fact that Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the institution of the Eucharist, and pass over our Saviour's last words to his disciples on the same night, and St. John, who is silent as to the former, records the latter. These facts, together with St. John's silence concerning the prophecy on Mount Olivet, point to an understanding between him and St. Matthew as to the structure of their Gospels. His passing over the *prophecy* is little or no evidence of this, for he may have thought that the three previous records of it, like the three of the Transfiguration, were complete.

That prophecy largely pertained to the end of a cycle of time which the last Evangelist looked upon as closed so far as the Jews were concerned. Its proper place, then, was in the earlier Gospels, for, more than the others, the Gospel of St. John looks forward to the future. This is seen in the coming of the Greeks seeking the Saviour; and more fully in our Lord's promise of the Holy Ghost, who, in his stead and with greater power than his own, is to convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment to come.

It was every way different with the discourses on the night before the crucifixion. St. Matthew and

St. Peter heard them; yet they are not given in the first nor in the second Gospel, neither are they given in the third. From all of these facts the inference is sure, not only that St. Matthew and St. John wrote in concert, but that both St. Peter and St. Paul knew that the writing out of these words of the dying Saviour was intrusted solely to the Disciple whom Jesus loved.

It was more than human wisdom that separated the word given on Mount Olivet and the institution of the holy Sacrament from the last words of Jesus to his family. He always speaks like himself, and there is no dissonance between the prophecy and the farewell; but there is a wide difference in their effect on the mind and the heart, and they were divinely kept apart because the soul, in the same mood of mind and heart, cannot assimilate them. The reason why the institution of the sacrament is, in like manner, kept apart from the farewell of Jesus, is of greater moment. The wisdom of God in placing even those solemn and tender words of his Son apart from the holy sacrament, so constructed the Gospels that the sacrament should stand out by itself in a way that tends to give to that ordinance its right place in the mind and heart of his Church.

Seeming differences of a minor sort, such as there must needs be in narratives of the same events when the attendant circumstances that once would have made them clear have long been forgotten, rightly appear to be of little account when so remarkable a difference is explained and justified, and become a help to making the organic unity of the

Evangeliad as clear to the Christian intellect as it has ever been to the Christian heart. The sense of that unity is heightened by the study of the distinctive characteristics of each Gospel. That unity is not matter of private opinion nor of any late finding out. Differences in the Gospels were as clearly seen, as keenly felt, and more exaggerated, in the apostolic generations than they have ever been since; yet in all past time, even as now, Christians have felt that the fourfold Evangel was one Evangel; and of this, feeling is the highest critical test, and the only decisive one.

To that unity let us give one parting glance; and, my friendly and tireless reader, you will make what further I have to offer your own better than through any labor of argument, if you will imagine yourself to be one of the Christians dwelling in Alexandria in the last half of the first century, and will put yourself in the place and enter into the thoughts and feelings of a Christian convert in that age, when, at four different times and from four different places, the four Gospels came to that great center of the intelligence of the Roman world. In Alexandria, in the first Christian century, you are reading the manuscript of St. Matthew's Gospel. Knowing the great outlines of the Saviour's life from the oral teaching in the churches, and having often heard traditions of his ministry in Judea, you are surprised to find that up to the time of his last visit to Jerusalem St. Matthew so confines his record to what took place in Galilee. Still you are not surprised that he does not mark this omission,

because the great fact, that he passes over in silence, is familiar to all. You wonder more to find that after his description of the Sacrament he omits those solemn and tender words of love, of hope, of prophecy, with which the Lord took leave of his Disciples, some faint rumor of which has gone every-where abroad. His silence seems so strange in a Gospel largely framed of discourses of the Lord, that for the moment you question the correctness of what you had heard; but, as you reflect upon the scene in that large upper chamber, on that hour looked forward to by the Lord, on the peaceful private interview at night, on the institution of the new sacrament, on the fearful separation that was nigh, you feel convinced that the Church has not been mistaken in its belief that in that hour the Lord uttered words such as even by him were never said at any other time. You think of his discourse when the Disciples were sent forth on their mission, and your conviction deepens that he parted not from them in this silence. You think over the Sermon on the Mount; you think over all his recorded discourses; and, with his life, his death, his glorious resurrection before your mind, you try to frame for yourself the farewell of the Lord to his children on the eve of his betrayal, his trial, condemnation, and death. Vain the effort of the unsatisfied mind! You even doubt whether those great discourses that before filled your soul with such content might not have been better spared than this which you so much desire to hear. Nor can your earnest heart be satisfied even with the manuscript of an Apostle,

until the thought comes to your mind that St. Matthew could only have passed over what was so precious because he knew that some one would co-operate with him in the great work of making a written memorial of the life of the Lord.

Years pass away, and then the Gospel penned by Mark, and accredited by the last Epistle of St. Peter, becomes known to the Christian world. The first disciple who comes thereafter journeying from Babylon bears with him the precious scroll, a welcome offering to the Church in Alexandria. You read the manuscript and find that, like St. Matthew's, it passes over the ministry of the Lord in Judea, and that it contains not those words which your heart longs more and more to hear as life is passing away.

At length the Christians of Alexandria are gladdened with the Gospel of St. Luke; you unroll the manuscript, and read with kindling eyes the opening words, which promise to confirm that which is believed in all the Churches, and which seem to promise to you that the writer can and will supply what the others have omitted. The opening of the Gospel is glorious beyond your hopes. There is the Evangel of the infancy, there are the memories which the mother's heart had treasured up of the birth of the Holy Child, the gift of the Blessed Virgin to the Church. There are many things new and precious. But even this Gospel is no less wondrous in its silence than glorious in its fullness; for some reason leads St. Luke, as it had led St. Mark and St. Matthew, to pass over in silence what

the Lord did in Judea, and like them to pass over in silence those words so long waited for in earnest hope; and again it seems to you that the only solution of this mystery is that to some Apostle has been intrusted the high duty of recording the sacred life in Judea, and that to him also has been granted the honor and blessing of prolonging in the Church forever, the celestial music of those parting words of the Saviour.

The years roll on until your hope begins to die. You hardly think you will ever hear those words on earth, and believe they exist for you only in the record of things below the sun, that is treasured in heaven. But at length the manuscript of the last Apostle flies through the world. Christian Alexandria, crowding on the mole, greets afar on the sea the welcome bark that brings one who, in his bosom, bears a scroll more precious than all the costly freight which the galley is hurrying to the mart with the speed of the wind and the strength of the oar. The manuscript of the aged Apostle is unrolled in the Church of Alexandria. You listen to that choral song, which flows as if from out the infinite far realms, where Christ hath gone. Page after page falls on the listening ear of the vast throng; all and more than all you know of the Lord in Judea is told as only by St. John it could be told. The sacred record grows into full beauty and perfection. At length the intense feeling of the weeping throng deepens to an ecstasy of fear and hope, and, amid all the uproar of the crowded mart, whose living surges beat against the walls, the

hushed temple is still as a sepulcher as the reader comes to the night of the solemn Sacrament, of some of whose words but faintest echoes had reached the Christian Church, and lo, at that moment when Matthew, Mark, and Luke hushed their voices in reverential silence, the reader goes on reciting, "Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." With adoring thankfulness, with wrapt wonder, you hear this unimagined word. The wisdom and mercy of God hath at last given to man a record of his Son complete beyond all fear, glorious beyond all hope. You foreknow that every dying Christian will hear the words, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." The work of the chosen Witnesses is at last complete, and, like him who beheld the glory of the Life of the Lord in its beginning, seeing the full glory of its close, you say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

INDEX:

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES.

THOSE who consult the Index in this (as well as in my other books) will find in short-hand, facts set forth there, rather than to overburden the Text with notes; or that, with the printed page before me, yet seemed to be needed. Thus, for the Taxing under Cyrenius, see the Title, Dates in the Gospels; for the Time of the Last Supper, Times and Seasons. See, also, Mary, the sister of Lazarus; St. Matthew, his Gospel; Nain, and other Titles.

ARAMEAN OR SYRO-CHALDAIC LANGUAGE. Called the Hebrew tongue, Acts xxi, 40, xxii, 2; in use after the Captivity; one of the two languages spoken by Jews of Palestine at the Christian era; the mother tongue (Mark v, 41, xv, 34, Acts xxvi, 14) of our Lord and his Disciples, 96, 97. The transference of the Gospel from that tongue into Greek, 98; could have been so well done only by Jews of Palestine, 99; this not disproved by the style of St. Luke, 99. In that language St. Matthew first wrote; a trace of this, (xvi, 17,) see note, 278. Some years after he translated his Gospel into Greek, 99, 193–195.

BAPTISM OF CHRIST JESUS. Touches of difference in its descriptions, 243; alluded to, though not described, by St. John, 241, 242; its privacy, 245; John its sole witness, 245–247; was it the full Beginning of the Ministry? 241, 245, 255, 261.

BETHANY. Why St. Luke, x, 38, referred to it as "a certain village," 182, 183. St. John's allusion to that verse, 188. That in the search of Jerusalem (169) Bethany was included, is not only probable in itself, but quite certain from the fact that, for some religious purposes, the Rabbins held that suburb to be a part of the Holy City.

BIRTH OF OUR LORD. The silence of the inspired Evangelists concerning the Day, 150–152.

CANA OF GALILEE. Silence of Matthew, Mark, and Luke as to the miracles (John xi, 1–11, iv, 46–54) there wrought, 219–222. Two sites are claimed for this hamlet, one at Kefr Kenna, four miles or so from Nazareth, the other at Kâna el Ielîl, eight miles.

Lieut. Conder ("Tent-work in Palestine") thinks "it far more probable that Kenna, on the road to Tiberias, would be the place twice visited by Christ, than the remote Kâna, which is on no man's road of travel." The sites were so near that this is of no weight; and that Kâna *was on no man's road of travel* rather strengthens the tradition (much the most ancient of the two) that it was the place. Its name is strong evidence of it, and since the time of Robinson it has been generally held to be so. It matters little or nothing to my argument which of the sites is the true one —the village, unnamed by Josephus or in the Talmud, was humble and obscure.

CAPERNAUM. Silence of Matthew, Mark, and Luke concerning the healing (John iv, 46–54) of a son of a nobleman of that city, 178, 219–222.

DATES IN THE GOSPELS. 150–158. The Birth of Christ, 150–152; beginning of his Ministry, 154–156, 266, 267; Acts x, 34–37. "Then Peter said, the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, *began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached.*" Line fifth, 157, and line fourth, 151, require a word concerning a parenthesis that has given rise to a learned, voluminous, instructive, interesting, and, for the most part, *irrelevant* debate. "In the days of Herod the king (Luke i, 5) it came to pass that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed, (ii, 1, 2;) *and this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria.*" Even in the rudest taxation there are, 1. The census or enrollment; 2. The valuation or assessment; 3. The collection. In all languages the word Taxation points to one or another of these stages of the process, or to the whole process, as the case may be. If it were now written that a Decree for Taxation went forth from the Emperor Napoleon III., and was carried out by President M'Mahon, change of government and delay would be implied. St. Luke marks that when the Decree went forth the grandest of monarchs, next to Cæsar, reigned in Jerusalem. His intense personality and dramatic history, his largesses to cities of Europe and Asia, the feeling that he was the last of the great subject-kings of Rome, and the length of his reign, made him, after Augustus, the most striking figure and best-known man in the Roman world. The crash of the great Herodian house—*sonitum ruinæ auditum Medis*—resounded through the Roman world as through our world the late crash of the Corsican Dynasty. Jerusalem was "far the most illustrious city of Asia," (Pliny, Nat. Hist., lib. v, 15;)

then as now the Jews were every-where; and then as now it was felt by many that somehow the world's fate was bound up with theirs. St. Luke, with the brief allusion, proper in a parenthesis, to things well known, points onward to the epoch eleven years after Herod's death, when Augustus made Jerusalem a suburb of Antioch, Judea a province of Syria, and sent into exile the son of his ally and friend. If, with the three stages of Taxation in mind, the parenthesis be read in the light of the time, the long-drawn debate about it is seen to be out of all proportion to the case, for its meaning becomes too plain for controversy.

FAMILY OF BETHANY. Mary and Martha, unnamed by Matthew or Mark, and briefly noticed by Luke (x, 38) as living in "a certain village"—strangeness of this reserve as to the Family now of all others in Judea the most thought of save that of our Lord; the use made of it to discredit the Gospels; and its reason, 181, 182. St. John's reference (xi, 10, 11) to that verse of St. Luke, 188. *This is evidence of his thorough knowledge of this Gospel.* Of the intention of the chief priests to kill Lazarus at the time of the Crucifixion, 171. Of the suppression of the name of Mary by Matthew and Mark when describing what she did in the house of Simon of Bethany, 183–188.

FATHERS. Worth of their evidence to the origin and authorship of the Gospels, 70, 313, 314. Their universal testimony to St. Peter's relation to the second Gospel, 313–315. Alford's mistake as to its nature and value, 313. Their testimony to St. Paul's relation to the third Gospel less general, but decisive, 322–324.

GALILEE. The people of, 122.

GREEK LANGUAGE. Spoken in Jerusalem and in all Palestine, 97.

INSPIRATION OF THE GOSPELS. Part I, chap. viii, pp. 134–146.

JOHN THE BAPTIST. Portraits of, 242; see also 254. Consistency of his history, 243–245. Brought up in the desert, 244; see also 159. His greatness, 247. His sole witness to the signs at the Baptism, 245, 246. Never preached in Jerusalem, 254. The introduction of his witness into the prelude to St. John's Gospel, 247–253. His last testimony, 267, 268. Of the continuance of his proclamation after he knew that Jesus was the Messiah, 254–261. The causes of his imprisonment and murder. Did the Pharisees have any thing to do with it? 268–270.

JOHN, ST. Why chosen one of the apostolic Evangelists, 110, 112, 124, 126. The long time that he took to meditate upon his Gospel, 115, 116, 349, note. The thoroughness of the oral teaching

in all the Churches should be noted in this connection, as well as that the other Gospels were every-where known. Tradition in Eusebius as to the origin of his Gospel, 114, 115; in the Muratorian Catalogue, 349, note. HIS GOSPEL. Reasons why the ministry in Judea was assigned to John, 112, 123–126. Comment on its earlier chapters, Part III, chaps. ii, iii, iv, pp. 240–287. His relations with his old master, the Baptist, 242, 248, 249. Introduction of his witness into the prelude to the Gospel, 247–253. Its theme—the eternal Word manifest in the flesh, 350, 351. The opening of his Gospel presupposes the revelations of the divinity of the Lord in the other Gospels, 350. See also 249, 250, 251. They prepare for the last Gospel, 345, 349, 350. St. John's method, 351, 352. His Gospel the completion of the Evangeliad, 354. Looks more to the future than the other Gospels, 361.

JOSEPHUS. Character of his writings, 47–51.

JUDEA. Its isolation, 118. Feeling of the Jews in the days of the Disciples, that of all Palestine only this district was then the Holy Land, 118–121. See also 214, 216.

JUSTIN MARTYR. The exposure by Lightfoot, Westcott, Ezra Abbot, and others of the uncritical handling in "Supernatural Religion" of the references of Justin to our four Gospels has established, beyond further controversy, conclusions to which judicious scholars long since came: so far as required, these are stated, 104, 105. Justin speaks of St. Mark's Gospel as St. Peter's, 314.

LAZARUS. Not named by Matthew, Mark, or Luke, 182. Strangeness of this and its reason, 181–183. *Intent of the Jews to kill Lazarus*, 171. These verses of John xii, 9, 10, 11, should there have been given: To Bethany much people "came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But *the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;* because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus."

LUKE, ST. Careful as to dates, 151, 157. For his reference to Cyrenius, see Dates. His relations with St. Paul, 333–335, 338, 341. HIS GOSPEL. Bearing upon its date of the fact that, like St. Mark's, it was of equal authority with the two apostolic Gospels, 61, 62. Its relations to the oral Gospel, 102, 92, 93; also Part III, chap. i. Its place in the unfolding revelation, 296, 347–349. Difference between its tone and that of the first Gospel, 293–296, 347. Its description of the centurion compared with St. Matthew's, 298–300. Witness of the Fathers that St. Luke wrote out the Gospel taught by St. Paul, 322–324. Intent and

meaning of its preface, 324–333. Why this Gospel was addressed to Theophilus, 332. St. Paul's oral Gospel ascribed by that Apostle to the Lord himself, 342–344. See 1 Cor. xi, 23: there St. Paul, relating the institution of the sacrament, says, "I received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you."

MARK, ST. The time of his death uncertain, 316—compare last paragraph, 54, 55. HIS GOSPEL. That it did not bear the name and was not written by one of the Apostles proof of its date, 61, 62. Irenæus had this Gospel with its present ending; and the reception of the whole by the congregation in his time is conclusive evidence that *as completed* it had received apostolic sanction.

The Fathers universally bear witness to the fact that the second Gospel is St. Peter's Gospel written out by St. Mark, 313. St. Peter's allusion to this Gospel, 315. Its originating and other motives, 297–307. Its witness to the Incarnation, 309–311. For this Gospel, see 293, 297, 229, 346, 347.

MARY, THE SISTER OF LAZARUS. Her anointing of the Saviour, (Matt. xxvi, 6–16; Mark xiv, 3–11; John, xii, 2–8,) 183–188. This was in Bethany, which, in Luke x, 38, is "a village," *κώμην τινα*. He tells of an anointing, (vii, 36–50,) *εν τη πόλει*, "in the city;" that is, Capernaum. Every one has marked the recurrence, in his own life or in the lives of others, of similar events. In the history of the last hundred years similar events are frequent. *Twice* a great war begins in April, on its 19th day, and with an attack upon Massachusetts militia men; *twice* a Bonaparte is the first officer of a French republic; *twice* such a one, by fraud and force, becomes emperor; *twice* there is sudden ruin; *twice*, imprisonment and death in exile; and *twice* there is an only son. Yet, when two thousand years are done, if then there be as now celebrity-seeking men, they will prove such history is legendary. Of the similar events in the life of Christ, not one in fifty is recorded. There was little to distinguish the hundred healings of the sick, the lame, and the blind. That Christ cleansed the Temple on his first coming to Jerusalem, and again at his last coming, was as natural as that the traders undid what he had done before. Anointing was an Eastern usage. Each of the two anointings was in the house of a man of as common a name as that of Smith; and to this striking similarity in the two cases another as remarkable might be added—each was in the house of a man, and not of a woman! All else—the place, the persons, all that was said, all that was done, was different. And when such spasmodic believers as Schleiermacher confound these two anointings there is no escaping

the conviction that in this case they love darkness rather than light.

MARY, THE MOTHER OF OUR LORD, 106, 365, 171, 172, 190; decisive evidence of St. Matthew's caution for her safety, 191, 192.

MATTHEW, ST. Chosen to write out the Gospel, 107; his large comprehension of what was required of the earliest Evangelist, 289; reticence and other characteristics, 111, 124; his portrait of the centurion, 298–300; the wounding of Malchus, 229, 230; the paying of the Temple tax, 232–234; his style as affected by his reticence, 111, 112, 233, 234, end of note; his characteristic words, reason for them, 300, 301. HIS GOSPEL. Transferred from Hebrew into Greek by the Apostle himself, 193–195: the historic element larger, and in it the Messianic prophecies more fully verified, than in the second or the other Gospels, 289, yet see note, 354; compared with St. Luke's, 293–296; with St. John's, 288, 289, 271, 284, 294, 295; unity of his Gospel, 288, 235. The style of St. Matthew's Gospel that of an eye-witness and *its testimony personal testimony of the highest kind*, 298–301. Yet, echoing many others, Godet says "the intuitive descriptive character is altogether wanting" to his Gospel. He cites as evidence that portrait of the centurion, so life-like that St. Peter passed the centurion without a word! Godet talks of the second editor of St. Matthew's Gospel. He caught up this notion from skeptics who bring that Gospel down as late as A. D. 130. His own dates refute him: these are A. D. 60–63 for our Gospel, and 64 or 65 for the "Book of Discourses" imagined for St. Matthew. Where, then, the time to have set the discourses in a frame of events? Who could have done a work so wonderful and have been utterly unknown? Would St. Matthew have put up with such interference? Would the Church have let another masquerade in the Apostle's clothes? This after-feat of interweaving the words with facts so as to make our Gospel is a sheer impossibility. This carrying back and misapplying a later method, this fancying that any Disciple ever thought of editing his Master's words apart from his acts, is ridiculous. That a Gospel of such oneness in conception and execution can be a patched up thing, made over and mended, whether by "a second editor" or by many, (see note, 313,) is as silly a critical notion as I ever met with! Godet's facile mind also sets aside the decision of the Church as to St. Peter's Second Epistle; and faith must dispense with the help of such unquiet people, who, in trying to defend it, throw away that for which there can be no compensation.

MURATORIAN CATALOGUE, 323.

NAIN, THE RAISING OF THE WIDOW'S SON, 86; why passed over by Matthew and Mark, 228. A paragraph for 335, line 29, carrying out the argument in chap. i, Part III, by some oversight of mine, was not sent to the printers, and is here given in brief. Though the Apostles in their oral Gospel, and the other Evangelists, showed their confidence in the evidence set forth of their Lord's divinity by giving but one manifestation of his power over the grave, St. Luke may have thought that if only the one manifestation of that power in the two previously written Gospels were given by him, its visible exercise might be left too dependent upon a single illustration of it—and yet, from the point of view whence we looked at the fifteen miracles, (chap. i, Part III,) the recital of the miracle at Nain is seen to be related to the message the Baptist sent from his prison at Machærus, on the other side of the Jordan. That message, with the reply and with what was said to the people in consequence of the message, are a long consecutive recital. I do not think the miracle was recorded solely or chiefly because of this, yet these verses show the natural and close relation between the two. "He that was dead sat up and began to speak—and this rumor went throughout all Judea and *throughout all the region round about, and the disciples of John showed him all of these things*, and John calling two of his disciples sent them to Jesus." Luke vii, 15–18.

NAMES IN THE EVANGELIAD, 176–178, 230, 231. In the course of the argument, chap. ii, Part III, it should have been said that the brethren of our Lord "did not believe in him," (John vii, 5,) and that this *may* have had something to do with St. Matthew's naming "James, Joses, Simon, and Judas." xiii, 55.

NAZARETH. A reason suggested for its evil name, 217.

PAPIAS, A. D. 140, wrote a comment on our Gospels, and interwove traditions with it. Of this lost book Eusebius gives a few debated sentences. Papias speaks of the λογια, (sacred oracles, of Matthew;) skeptics and others have mistaken this for λογοι, discourses. In Rom. iii, 2, and Heb. v, 12, the term is used for the Hebrew Scriptures, and it merely shows that Papias held the Scripture of Matthew to be inspired. Our Gospels are like no other writings, and such the peculiarity of their structure and origin, and so different the classes to whom they had to be described, that they could hardly have had at once a common and exclusive name for them. Hence their several names in Justin. The conjecture that Matthew compiled a "Book of Discourses" grew out of that

blunder as to Papias' term, (λογια.) His comment was in five parts; the discourses on the earliest Gospel can be arranged in five classes, and in this, confirmation of the conjecture was found; but had Papias' comment been in six or seven parts, (as the "Discourses" can be put in as many classes,) the argument from this striking coincidence would be as good as now—that is, good for nothing. Papias also says that Matthew wrote in Hebrew; and the same persons understand him to say further that every one translates him as he best can; and their inference is, that in his time there was no Gospel of Matthew in Greek. What Papias did say was, that there had been a time when each one had to translate what Matthew wrote in Aramean as he could—a needless and shallow remark touching what was written in the provincial tongue of a district not larger than Wales, that suits well with Eusebius' poor opinion of the worthy antiquarian's capacity. No one cared to preserve Papias' stories merely for their own sake, much as he thought of them; but Eusebius alludes to one about "a woman accused of many sins," and, with a positiveness equal to the vagueness of this statement, she is now taken to be the woman accused of one. John viii, 1–11. St. Augustine gives the reason why some ancient versions and manuscripts of the last Gospel left that paragraph out. It is becoming the fashion to treat that paragraph as not belonging to John's Gospel; but heretofore critical opinion has been very evenly balanced on that point. And now Wordsworth, while rejecting it, says, "The external evidence for it is strong, the internal evidence rather in its favor, and it is coherent with what precedes."

PETER, ST. His descriptive powers contrasted with those of St. Matthew, 301–306. His reticence as to things personal, 304, and see note. HIS GOSPEL. The second Gospel cited as his by Justin, 314. Known as such by Tertullian, Irenæus, Jerome, and other Fathers, 313, 314. Originating motive of that Gospel, 297–307. Other motives, 307. Its witness to the Incarnation, 309–313.

PETRONIUS.—Story of, 119, 120. Josephus, Bell. Jud. xi, 10.

PLATO, PHILO, and ST. JOHN, 251–253.

PRAYING OF OUR LORD, 243.

SCRIPTURES EXPLAINED. The seeming contradiction of Matt. viii, 7 and Luke vii, 6 as to the presence of the centurion. Sewall's reconciliation of the two, 298; the difference between Matt. viii, 28, as to the place of the cure of the demoniacs, "the country of the Gergesenes," and Mark v, 1, Luke viii, 26, "of the Gadarenes,"

note, 122; see also note, 320; John vii, 8, "I go not up to the feast," and 10, "then went He up unto the feast," 285, 286.

SECOND CHAPTER OF ST. MATTHEW. Its historic and geographic terms, 152–154. I would here preserve the judgments of three scholars (as published in daily journals over their own names) concerning the Discussion of those terms in "The Wise Men"—that of Charles H. Brigham, Professor of Ecclesiastical History; Tayler Lewis, Professor of Greek in Union College; and Howard Crosby, author of a Greek Grammar, Chancellor of the University of New York. Professor Brigham said, "The Discussion of the meaning of the word ἀνατολῶν, is exceedingly close and ingenious. If patient pleading and the collation of historic and archæological facts can establish so nice a proposition, an excellent *prima facie* case has certainly been made out." Dr. Lewis said, "The dissertation on the East and the Far East is important, clear, and I think accurate." Dr. Crosby said, "In a very masterly and convincing manner the author shows that the plural and singular ἀναταλῶν and ἀνατολῆ conform to the Hebrew Mizrach and Kedem and are the Far-East and the East, and that these were to the Jews of Matthew's day geographical designations, representing the Medo-Persian country, and Babylonia."

SON OF GOD, 309, note. The omission of those words (Mark i) from Davidson's "New Testament" led to that note, whose tone is not warranted by the facts, as the manuscripts almost universally have those words, and as he follows the Sinaitic manuscript, which (it seems to be agreed) is carelessly written.

STEPHEN, ST. His argument, 166. This martyr the forerunner of Paul, 166. The persecution that began with his trial; its character and motive, 164–172.

STYLE OF THE EVANGELISTS, 147–149.

TIMES AND SEASONS. As to the day of the Last Supper there is much discussion; yet, so far from leaving it uncertain, all the Evangelists fix the day by the term παρασκευή, the Preparation Day. Matt. xxvii, 62, Mark xv, 42, Luke xxiii, 54, John xix, 14, 31. Matthew, Mark, and Luke also fix it as the day of unleavened bread (xxvi, 17, xiv, 12, xxii, 7); Mark and Luke also, as the day when, according to the law, the Paschal Lamb must be slain, that is, the 14th day of the month Nisan. Each and all so fix the day as to confirm what is said 150, 157, 158, of their carefulness as to Times and Seasons. When the sun of the 13th day had set, then the 14th day began, and then our Lord gave the order to make ready the Passover. It was kept by Him on the evening thus

belonging to the 14th day. It was kept by the Jews on the evening of the 15th day. The last fact is certain from each of the earlier Gospels, when read with the knowledge of the Jewish calendar, which their writers reasonably looked for, or give in their own words; yet to modern readers that fact comes out unmistakably, only in the Gospel of St. John. It there so incidentally comes out, that evidently St. John is not aware of any variance between the earlier Gospels and his own; and as he does not feel that there is a variance, there can be none. The debate has arisen out of the idea that the time-law of the festival was more rigorously observed than it can have been. With no record of the fact, it is as certain as if it were of record, that at one point the letter of the law was set aside. It was not possible to keep the law that the Paschal Lamb must be slain between the hours of three and five on the 14th day; and the killing in the Temple of the 260,000 lambs needed for the great feast of all Israel in Jerusalem must have been going on for days before the 14th. There must have been other departures from the legal times, that were exceptional. If some family were called home before the eve of the 15th, (the slain lamb could be had,) and no doubt they ate their Passover before they went. If some aged man who had dragged himself to the Holy City lay at the point of death and desired to eat his last Passover, there must have been the good sense and the good feeling to grant his pious wish by anticipating the time; and the more readily, since the time-law, set aside by common consent as to one point, was loosened as to all others. The family of Jesus kept their Passover before the others. Nothing is said of a Paschal Lamb at their table; but our Lord called that supper a Passover. He changed it into the Sacrament; and the events of that day are parts of one whole. The Lord Jesus is the sacrifice—the Paschal Lamb foretold, (1 Cor. v, 7.) At the beginning of that 14th day our Lord revealed himself to his own family as the Lamb of God, whose flesh and blood is the life of the soul, and before that day was done, He revealed himself to all the world as the Lamb slain for the sin of the world. On that 14th day of the month Nisan, the day for the slaying of the Paschal Lamb, He transformed the Passover into the Sacrament; on that same day he was slain, and the typical prophetic Jewish Passover ended forever.

UNBELIEF. Disqualifies for sacred criticism, 77. Worthlessness of the skeptical writings concerning the Scriptures, 78.

VERBAL COINCIDENCES IN THE GOSPELS, 42.

WRITING OUT OF THE GOSPELS, 44.

THE WISE MEN:

WHO THEY WERE, AND HOW THEY CAME TO JERUSALEM.

By FRANCIS W. UPHAM, LL.D.

12mo, pp. 258. Price, $1.

In his admirable "Life of Jesus," Dr. Deems makes this frankly honorable and noteworthy statement: "This book is the first successful attempt that I have seen to clear up this pilgrimage. After reading it I canceled what I had before written on the subject."

British Quarterly Review, No. CXIX, July, 1874.

The subject is surrounded with grave difficulties, and demands candid, careful, and thorough examination. Without these the character of the Magi, the country from which they came, the inducements under which they acted, the reception they experienced at the hands of Herod, cannot be appreciated or understood. On all these questions Dr. Upham has bestowed an examination at once thorough and scholarly, has removed all difficulty, and has invested the whole subject with singular interest. In no instance that we recollect has the visit of the magi been so luminously investigated, or so completely substantiated as a part of the divine history. The volume has our earnest commendation.

The Presbyterian Review.

We trust Dr. Upham will work on in the same rich vein of scriptural investigation, and thus lay the Christian public under yet greater obligations.

Hartford Evening Post.

If a pot of old coin is dug up in the ruins of some forsaken city, the telegraphic wires quiver round the world announcing the great discovery; but here is a discovery of quite another kind—the solution of a historical and religious mystery! We recall our childish impressions of this pilgrimage—our mature ideas were not much better. We recall our very picture of the magi; of the bowed forms of three giant-like old men; men of little account; a sort of fakirs or fortune-tellers, wandering from a great but indefinite distance; lonely, humble, tattered, and forlorn; in their long, dusty, graceless, and travel-stained gowns, turbaned and sandaled; wandering, they knew not whither, to find the King of the Jews. Who were they? Whence came they? How could they learn of the King of the Jews by a star? and what was the King of the Jews to them? This strange bewildering tale, of a pilgrimage so improbable, so without any intelligible cause, of strangers from a far-off land who could know nothing of Christ—how could all this be? With such thoughts we took up the answer to the question, Who were the Wise Men?

It is seldom that learned people take the trouble to bring things within the comprehension of the people, but this is a book for the people, and they feel this magnetically. It does not lower the subject down, it lifts the reader up to it. Its sentences are like new coins just struck from the mint. The style flows like a swift river, deep and full, yet clear as crystal. Any one can see the thought, yet it is often so deep that the longer it is looked into the deeper it seems. A third or fourth reading brings out something new. What the writer seeks to prove comes out point by point till nothing is left to ask for. No shadow of doubt remains. In the light of this unique book we read the thrilling story of the Wise Men as we never read it before; and in the still night we look with new wonder and awe into the blue depths above, and wish we knew which of all these glittering orbs was the one created "to herald through all worlds and date through all time" the advent of Him who was the Maker of all the worlds.

STAR OF OUR LORD:

OR, CHRIST JESUS, KING OF ALL WORLDS, BOTH OF TIME OR SPACE, WITH THOUGHTS ON INSPIRATION, AND THE ASTRONOMIC DOUBT AS TO CHRISTIANITY.

BY FRANCIS W. UPHAM, LL.D.

12mo, pp. 357. Price, $1 50.

The author of this volume is a brother of Professor Thomas C. Upham, of Bowdoin College, so dear, for a quarter of a century, to the successive classes in that institution. He has many of the characteristics of his eminent brother: a shrinking modesty, a beautiful and fervent faith; a scholarship as exact as it is full; a marvelous patience in investigation; a quaint, refined, and exquisite style; and a most noble spirituality of tone and thought. A few years ago Dr. Upham published a book about the Wise Men that surprised even those who were wonted to such researches. It was the porch to this inner sanctuary. And the comparison of a sanctuary is fit and accurate in describing this volume. In all its argument, in all its description, in its array of facts, in the current of musing, it is profoundly religious. It is a book all full of belief. The religiousness is real, in the soul of the book more than in its phrases, in the swell of the sea on which this bark of discovery rides. A book like this, in our critical, doubting time, when Orthodoxy is so wavering, and so many hardly know what they believe or where they stand—a book so sweet, fervent, rapt in its vision of heavenly things, which is so high and deep in its thought—is delight and refreshment. It is original enough in its proposition and its conclusion, even by its title-page, to be classed with books of sensation. But it belongs, in reality,

to a very different class, to the class of which only elect souls see all the meaning and truth, and which teach continually, as their musical sentences linger in the memory.—*The late* CHARLES H. BRIGHAM, (*Unitarian,*) *Professor of Ecclesiastical History.*

No Greek or Hindu legend could have been so historically cleared, so explained, so exhibited in harmony with the highest human thought. In this there is no compromise, not the least ground for any suspicion of Dr. Upham's own orthodoxy. A great salvation from a great and fearful perdition, secured alone by the expiatory death of a great and divine Saviour, who is the Head of the Church, the Life of the Church, being at the same time *the Lord of the Universe, and the indwelling Word or Life of Nature itself*—this is the great idea that runs through these books. The writer presents it with unflinching boldness. It is this fearless and at the same time most candid treatment of *suppressed difficulties* that entitles these works to our admiration. The term is used advisedly. There are such statements in the Bible, explicit narrations, the consideration of which may thus be said to be in a measure suppressed on account of their supposed difficulty. Such meet us in the beginning of Genesis and of Matthew. Unreliability in these places is unreliability every-where. Yet both of these parts of the Bible have been strangely neglected so far as any searching examination of them is concerned.

The difficulty in the story of the Wise Men and of the Guiding Star has been encountered by Dr. Upham with a fidelity, a clearness, and a vigor we have seen manifested no where else. He aims to prove, and most readers will be convinced that he does prove, the authentic verity of the narration. Among the things made clear, settled, we think, beyond controversion, is the connection of the Star with the prophecy of Balaam. The effect of it upon the mind of the reader is as convincing as it is startling and impressive. The old wonder makes credible the later prodigy. The eloquent exposition so lifts us into the supernatural sphere that it becomes natural, if we may use such a seeming paradox. In close connection with these prophetic wonders is the learned and satisfactory disquisition given in "The Wise

Men," on the religion of the ancient Persians, and its connection with primitive revelation. The Bible, a world book, even in its most ancient parts—such is the impression we get from the whole compass of this admirably managed argument—the Bible, a wonderous book, with a wonderous harmony, revealing, even in its most unpretending parts, a wonderous power of which the careless reader has little or no conception. The best argument for the divinity of the Scripture comes from such expositions as these, showing it to be indeed a field of buried treasure. This is strongly felt in reading Dr. Upham's masterly exposition of the Eighth Psalm. The objection to the Scriptures drawn from what is called the astronomical argument is the one from which we most shrink. All other naturalistic difficulties combined fall short of the appeal it makes to the imagination. We have nowhere seen this so well met as in the bold yet most fair and truthful argument devoted to it in this book.

Along with it there is a dwelling upon the doctrine of the Logos in nature, as well as in grace; a doctrine so unmistakably announced in the Scriptures old and new, yet so little heeded. We are thus led to the climax of the book: Christ the Lord of the worlds, his kingdom extending beyond the earth, having mysteries which pertain to thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, as well as to the human sphere. Thoughts like these certainly show themselves in the Scriptures, but the consideration of them is suppressed. We shrink from the difficulties they suggest. Dr. Upham meets them—meets them fairly, candidly—meets them, we think, triumphantly. Sometimes we hesitate in following him. We fear it may be only the fascination of his style and of his enthusiasm that carries us away. But there they are, plainly visible in the Scripture, the views for which he contends; and if we cannot resist the conviction that he is rightly employing its evidence, we are compelled to admit the power of his argument.—TAYLER LEWIS, *author of the "Six Days of Creation."*

Dr. Upham's new work abounds in sublimities and beauties, that mark him a poet as well as a careful student of the pages of history and revelation. His view of the confusion of tongues,

(13,) his description of Balaam and Abraham, (21–26,) his story of Jacob's funeral, (29,) his defense of the Guiding Star, (115, 116,) and his notice of Sennacherib, (135–140,) may be mentioned as some of the passages that exhibit his mingled powers of poetry and research. He considers the star which guided the Magi to have been a real star, perhaps the central star around which the material universe revolves, whose light first touched the earth at the time of our Saviour's birth, and whose guiding power from Jerusalem to Bethlehem was exercised through refraction, or some other natural law miraculously appointed for the purpose. The idea is certainly a most sublime one, that God should cause his grandest orb of glory to shine upon our sin-stricken earth, just as he caused his Son to appear upon it for man's salvation. We cannot here repeat or review Dr. Upham's arguments for his position, but can urge them as most interesting and weighty upon the attention of all. But whatever be the opinion of readers regarding the theory proposed, the book has excellences wholly apart from this. The part entitled "The Astronomic Doubt as to Christianity," is itself a treatise of great value; and the exposition of the Eighth Psalm, occurring in it, is a specimen of the highest and truest style of exegesis. His thoughts on the death of the children at Bethlehem, and his argument thence to the salvation of all infants, are novel and conclusive. But we cannot emphasize one part of the book above another. It is full of profound and original thought. It is a rich and precious contribution to the literature of a true christianity.—HOWARD CROSBY, D.D., LL.D., *Chancellor of the University of New York.*